

2005

DRAFT MOVING FORWARD

York Region's Second Annual Accessibility Plan



Acknowledgements

Regional Council would like to thank the many people who actively participated in the development and production of *Moving Forward: York Region's 2005 Accessibility Plan*.

Many people have contributed their time and expertise to make the development of this Plan a success including the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee, residents from across the Region who participated in the consultation on the Plan, members of the ODA Staff Committee as well as the many other Regional staff who provided assistance along the way.

Special thanks to the Office of the Regional Chair and CEO - especially Lina Bigioni, Director of Government Relations, who continues to provide strong advice and assistance on ODA implementation in York Region.

The dedication and support of all of these people is greatly appreciated.

ODA Staff Committee
photo to be inserted

York Region ODA Staff Committee



York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee

Front row: Regional Councillor Danny Wheeler, Bob Hunn, Barb Caiger

Second row: Joann Simmons, Commissioner of Community Services and Housing, Regional Councillor Joyce Frustaglio (Vice-Chair), Mary Ann Proulx, Kirsten Hill, Trish Robichaud, Wilf Morley (Chair), Sharon Abrahams, Zahra Brown

Other committee members: Regional Chair and CEO Bill Fisch, Diane Humeniuk

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Let Us Know What You Think

Your comments are important to us. Please let us know what you think about *Moving Forward*.

You can send in your comments or inquiries in any of the following ways:

Email: AccessYork@york.ca

Mail: A self-addressed stamped envelope has been included inside this plan.

The Regional Municipality of York
Community Services and Housing Department
Policy and Program Support Services Division
3rd Floor, 17250 Yonge Street
Newmarket, ON L3Y 6Z1

Phone: 1-888-256-1112

TTY: (905) 762-0401

Fax: (905) 895-5045

This publication may be accessed on the internet at www.york.ca

This document is available in alternative formats upon request.

This material has been prepared for specific use by the Regional Municipality of York.

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- Contact the Commissioner of Community Services and Housing for York Region or her designate regarding the purpose for which this material will be used.
- Use the following citation when referencing this document:

The Regional Municipality of York. (2005) *Moving Forward*: York Region's 2005 Accessibility Plan. Newmarket, Ontario.

- Acknowledge that York Region is providing a copy of its material for reference purposes only, and that the organization is responsible and liable for compliance with the ODA.

Moving Forward: York Region's 2005 Accessibility Plan **Comment Form**

This form is available on-line at www.york.ca

Your comments are important to us. Please take a few minutes to complete this form and let us know what you think about *Moving Forward: York Region's 2005 Accessibility Plan*.

1. What do you like most about the Plan (*Check as many boxes as you want*)

- ☐ The many new things that York Region will do in 2005 to make its services and programs easier for people with disabilities to use
- ☐ Learning more about all that the Region has already done to ensure people with disabilities can use York Region's services and programs
- ☐ The range of existing barriers that will be removed and new barriers that will be prevented
- ☐ How York Region will identify barriers within its programs and services
- ☐ That the Region is making it easier for people with different types of disabilities to use its services and programs
- ☐ Total number of initiatives to address barriers in 2005
- ☐ Types of barriers that will be addressed in 2005
- ☐ The participation of all Regional departments in accessibility planning
- ☐ The involvement of the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) in developing the Plan
- ☐ The overall layout and format
- ☐ Other: _____

2. What do you see as the key issues facing people with disabilities in York Region?

(*Check as many boxes as you want*)

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Transit | ☐ Housing |
| ☐ Roads | ☐ Social Assistance |
| ☐ Lack of services/supports | ☐ Lack of mandatory accessibility standards |
| ☐ Attitudes/awareness | ☐ Barriers in the private sector |
| ☐ Lack of information | ☐ Other: _____ |

3. Have you noticed an improvement in accessing Regional services and programs?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please list improvements. If no, please explain.

4. Is the Plan easy to read and understand?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If not, why?

5. Other Comments about *Moving Forward: York Region's 2005 Accessibility Plan*

- OVER -

General Information *(Optional)*

6. How did you find out about *Moving Forward*: York Region's 2005 Accessibility Plan?

(Check as many boxes as you want)

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Newspaper ad/article | ☐ York Region staff |
| ☐ Social Services/community agency | ☐ Region's web site |
| ☐ A York Region building | ☐ Municipal web site |
| ☐ York Region AAC | ☐ Other: _____ |
| ☐ York Region disability organizations | |

7. Are you a resident of York Region?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

8. Are you a person with a disability?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

8a. Are you a member of an organization or agency that represents or provides services to people with disabilities in York Region?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

8b. If yes, what is the name of the organization?

Organization's Name: _____

Thank you.

If you would like to receive more information about this Plan or accessibility planning in York Region, please contact us.

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Regional Overview

Introduction

Accessibility Planning in York Region

Introduction

Under the Ontarians with Disability Act, 2001 (ODA), all municipalities in the province have a legal obligation to prepare an annual accessibility plan. The plan must include a complete overview of the municipality's operations including its bylaws, programs, procedures, practices, policies, facilities and services.

This document is The Regional Municipality of York's second annual Accessibility Plan. The Region's first Plan, *Understanding Barriers* was released in September 2003 and included a detailed description of numerous initiatives that the Region would undertake over a fifteen month period to identify, remove and prevent barriers that impact people with different types of disabilities.

York Region received province-wide recognition for the work and commitment that went into *Understanding Barriers*. This second Plan builds on this commitment by including additional areas where staff will work to enhance the accessibility of all aspects of regional government.

This second Accessibility Plan highlights barriers that were identified and/or eliminated over the past year. Much was achieved in 2004 but there is more work to be done. York Region will continue to move forward on accessibility in 2005. Within these pages, the actions that the Region will take to identify, remove and prevent barriers are presented to give an overall picture of the work underway in every one of York Region's departments.



Regional Overview

The Regional Municipality of York is made up of the following nine local municipalities: Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, King, Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Vaughan and Whitchurch-Stouffville. This diverse region is a unique combination of urban centres and rural areas that sits on the northern border of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). York Region is one of six regional governments in Ontario and was created on January 1, 1971 by the provincial government.

In general, the Regional Municipality of York provides services and programs that are best delivered across wide areas, or those requiring large-scale coordination. The local municipalities provide programs and services that are more local in nature. *The Municipal Act, 2001* is the provincial legislation that outlines the areas of regional and local area municipal responsibility. The following list shows the specific types of services provided at the regional and area municipal levels.

The Regional Municipality of York	Area Municipalities
Police Services	Fire Protection
Emergency Medical Services (ambulance and paramedics)	Local Planning
Public Health Services	Local Economic Development
Long Term Care and Seniors	Building and Plumbing
Social Assistance	By-Law Enforcement
Housing Services	Licensing
Family and Children's Services	Local Roads
Regional Planning and Growth Management	Construction and Maintenance of Sidewalks
Regional Economic Development and Tourism Promotion	Waste Collection
Regional Roads	Water Distribution
Transit	Local Sewage
Water Treatment	Tax Collection
Solid Waste Management	Parks, Recreation and Heritage
Sewage Treatment	Libraries
Human Services Planning	Local Emergency Planning
Regional Emergency Preparedness	
Court Administration	

Population Trends¹

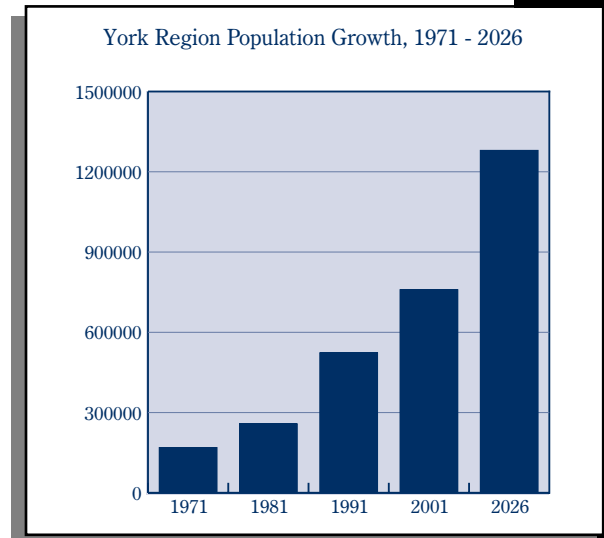
York Region's population has more than quintupled since its creation in 1971.

As of December 2004 the region's population was estimated to be approximately 889,591. Most of York Region's population growth has been concentrated in the three southern area municipalities of Vaughan, Richmond Hill and Markham.

Relative to the Greater Toronto Area and Canada, York Region has a younger population primarily due to the large proportion of people between the ages of 35 and 54 years, that make up 35% of the region's population.

The combination of a growing population that is also ageing poses a series of challenges for all levels of government to find ways to better anticipate the needs of an older population and to ensure that programs and services meet these needs.

It is anticipated that 21% of York Region's population will be seniors (65+) by 2026. Projections show that the seniors population will increase three times over the 2000 level to 263,000.



Persons with Disabilities in York Region²

According to Statistics Canada, there are approximately 1.5 million people with disabilities in Ontario representing approximately 13.5% of all citizens. By 2025, it's expected that this number will increase to three million people, or 20% of the population.

In 2001, the number of people in York Region who identified themselves as having a disability was about 90,330 or 12% of the total population. According to population projections for the region, it is estimated that the number of people with disabilities in 2026 will be approximately 18% of residents.

¹ Source: The Changing Face of York Region, A Demographic Profile by York Region Planning and Development Services Department.

² Source: Statistics Canada, Participation and Activity Limitation Survey, 2001. Statistics Canada, Custom Tabulations, Census 2001.

Note: Statistics are based on self-identification and include a broad scope of disability.

Accessibility Planning in York Region

The purpose of the ODA is to improve opportunities for people with disabilities in Ontario through the identification, removal and prevention of physical and other barriers that may impede the opportunities for people with disabilities to fully participate in society.

Under the ODA, the annual Accessibility Plan must include:

- Steps the Region has taken to identify, remove and prevent barriers.
- How the Region will assess its bylaws, policies, programs, practices and services to determine their impact on persons with disabilities.
- What bylaws, policies, services, programs and practices the Region will review in the coming year to identify barriers.
- Measures the Region will take in the coming year to identify, remove and prevent barriers in all of its services and programs including transit.

Even before the ODA was created, York Region had begun to enhance accessibility for people with disabilities in many of its programs, services and facilities. When York Regional Council adopted Vision 2026, the Region's long-term strategic plan, accessibility was included as a guiding principle. Vision 2026 provides the foundation that many important corporate initiatives are based on. Each of these initiatives further demonstrates the Region's commitment to eliminating barriers for persons with disabilities.

Understanding Barriers: York Region's First Annual Accessibility Plan (2004) is an extension of this work and enabled the Region to strategically focus efforts to meet the goal set out in the ODA. For the first time, all of the accessibility initiatives underway were brought together in one document.

York Region's Accessibility Plan Policy Framework

The accessibility planning process for York Region is based on the foundation provided by Vision 2026 and the ODA requirements. The process was set out in the Accessibility Plan Policy Framework that was approved by Regional Council in February 2003. The direction established in the Policy Framework paved the way for developing the Region's accessibility plans by creating an approach that involved every aspect of the Region's businesses and services.

As such, accessibility planning in York Region involves every Regional department. Each department develops its own department accessibility plan to identify, remove and prevent barriers in regional programs and services on an annual basis. The overall Accessibility Plan for the Region is built from the initiatives included in these department plans.

Achievements and Participation of York Region's Accessibility Advisory Committee

York Regional Council strongly supports the active participation of many different people and groups in the Region's accessibility planning process. Several members of Regional Council have been involved since the beginning of ODA implementation and networks have been formed to encourage ongoing communication with the area municipalities, stakeholder organizations, and the general public. Many Regional departments also worked with their own customers and clients to identify, remove and prevent different types of barriers that impacted people from receiving services or accessing various programs.

The York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) in particular has been a key resource and partner in the accessibility planning process. The AAC is a legislatively mandated committee created by York Regional Council that includes both members of Regional Council and citizen volunteers. The members of the AAC include people who have different types of disabilities, backgrounds and come from across York Region. The AAC plays a critical role in advising Council on the preparation, implementation and effectiveness of its annual Accessibility Plan. The York Region AAC played a key role in the development of the Region's first Accessibility Plan and continued to be involved in the implementation of that Plan.



Many initiatives required the AAC's direct input and committee members took part in training sessions, reviewed customer satisfaction surveys and examined both existing and proposed policies to provide advice on how to break down barriers for people with different types of disabilities.

The York Region AAC also hosted the first meeting of all AAC Chairs in York Region. This meeting brought representatives from the ten AACs in the region together with municipal staff to share common experiences and ideas about

accessibility issues. The meeting was also an important opportunity to hear about what projects are underway across the region and to learn from each other. More meetings of the AAC Chairs are being planned for 2005.

The York Region AAC was also involved in various stages of the development of *Moving Forward: York Region's 2005 Accessibility Plan*. The AAC met with Regional staff to discuss the department accessibility plans and to provide advice. The AAC also participated in the consultation session held to discuss the themes for the second accessibility plan in December 2004.

Report on the Implementation of York Region's First Plan



Implementation of the initiatives included in *Understanding Barriers: York Region's First Annual Accessibility Plan* was carried out in all Regional departments. Departments have taken action to identify, remove and prevent barriers in many Regional services and programs including public transit, housing, health services, social services, corporate communications and police services.

As the title *Understanding Barriers* suggests, the focus of many initiatives in York Region's first plan was on examining regional policies, programs, services, practices, procedures, by-laws and facilities to gain a better understanding of where barriers might exist and what needed to be done not only to remove the barrier but prevent it from occurring elsewhere. Although many departments had knowledge of certain types of barriers, the ODA and annual accessibility planning required that attention also be directed towards more invisible barriers such as communicational, informational or attitudinal barriers. Some of these activities initiated in 2004 are multi-year projects - the initial work was completed in 2004 but there may be ongoing efforts throughout 2005 and beyond.

Every department has been actively engaged in implementing changes designed to enhance accessibility. These initiatives have improved opportunities for people with disabilities to live independently, move around the region and access services and programs.

High Praise for *Understanding Barriers* and the Region's Accessibility Planning Achievements

On November 4, 2004, York Region received an Investing in Abilities Award from Future Abilities and Creative Employment (FACE), a non-profit organization that champions on behalf of persons with disabilities who are entering or returning to the workforce in York Region and Bradford West Gwillimbury.

York Region received the award for its ongoing efforts to remove barriers for people with a range of disabilities. The award recognizes the Region's work through its first Accessibility Plan and its commitment both as an employer and as a promoter of accessibility to give all residents more opportunities in York Region.

Further recognition came from the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario who identified York Region's process for establishing its Accessibility Advisory Committee and accessibility planning process as a best practice that can be shared with other organizations with obligations under the ODA. A case study detailing this best practice is available on the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario's web site: <http://www.gov.on.ca/citizenship/accessibility/>

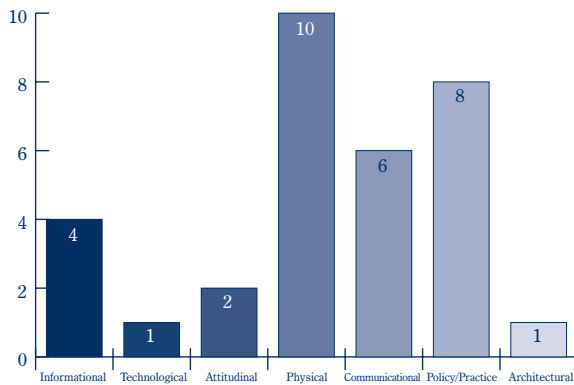
Highlights of 2003-2004 Accessibility Achievements

A review of the initiatives included in *Understanding Barriers* found that Regional departments were very successful in implementing their accessibility plan initiatives. The following statistics highlight the Region's accessibility achievements:

- *Understanding Barriers* included 65 barrier identification initiatives. At time of publication, 80% of these initiatives have been completed; another 15% are underway; and 5% have been planned for future work.
- A total of 32 initiatives were included as actions that would be taken in 2004 under the heading Barriers That Will Be Addressed. About 63% of these initiatives have been completed; 28% are underway; and 9% will be completed in 2005.

- One of the goals of the ODA is to encourage people and organizations to address the unseen barriers (i.e. non-physical) that impact different types of disabilities. The chart below

York Region 2004 ODA Implementation: Types of Barriers That Will Be Addressed¹



shows that the Region was successful in meeting this goal. The Region worked to remove as many policy and communication barriers as it did to remove the more obvious physical and architectural ones.

A detailed description of specific initiatives outlined in the first Plan is contained in the Summary of Achievements section of this document.

Developing York Region's 2005 Accessibility Plan

The Region's second Accessibility Plan continued to follow the direction set out in the Accessibility Plan Policy Framework. Efforts were made to integrate the development of the 2005 Plan with the Region's annual business planning and budget process. The objective of doing this is to ensure that accessibility initiatives are woven into each Regional department's annual budget planning process.

Similar to the development of *Understanding Barriers*, each Regional department participated by developing a department accessibility plan. Each department's accessibility plan is included in this document.

For the purposes of developing the Region's Accessibility Plan, each initiative put forward by departments to identify, remove and prevent barriers in 2005 has been organized around five key themes. The themes bring together the diverse aspects of the Region's programs and services into broader areas of action.

¹ Source: 2004 Department Accessibility Plan Implementation Report, the Regional Municipality of York.

These themes reflect the feedback from the York Region AAC and the public consultation of the key areas that impact the lives of people with disabilities.

The themes for the 2005 Plan are:

- Helping People Live Independently.
- Making it Easier to Move Around the Region.
- Making Regional Services More Accessible.
- Making it Easier to Participate in Regional Government.
- Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness.

Consulting with People from Across the Region

Consultation provides an excellent opportunity for Regional staff to continue to learn about the potential barriers faced by the public in accessing regional government programs and services.

A public consultation session was held to discuss the themes of the 2005 Plan. Individuals, regional and local AAC members, and representatives from community agencies met to provide advice and offer suggestions to enhance accessibility across the region.

The community was also encouraged to submit comments and suggestions about accessibility issues via York Region's web site.

A complete summary of comments received are available on York Region's web site at: www.york.ca.

Many comments raised are reflected in the initiatives included in the Region's 2005 Accessibility Plan, *Moving Forward*. Other comments identified areas that will be examined further and potentially included in future accessibility plans.





York Region's 2005 Accessibility Plan Summary

Summary

1. Helping People Live Independently
2. Making it Easier to Move Around the Region
3. Making Regional Services More Accessible
4. Making it Easier to Participate in Regional Government
5. Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness

Conclusion

Summary

The following pages describe the initiatives that will be taken in 2005 by York Region to enhance accessibility. The initiatives of individual departments have been grouped together to demonstrate what the Region has done and is planning to do under five key themes to better serve people with different types of disabilities.

1. Helping People Live Independently

Accessibility Achievements

Planning and Development

- York Region commenced review and revision of the Regional Official Plan policies that guide area municipalities in ensuring accessible urban design, and this process will continue in 2005.

Housing Services

York Region manages 1753 social housing units including seniors' housing complexes and supportive housing units. In 2004, the Region made numerous physical enhancements designed for the safety of residents in these buildings and to help them live independently. For example:

- The lighting in the public areas at three properties (190 Church Street, Keswick; 48 Wilson, Nobleton; 76/78 Dunlop, Richmond Hill) has been upgraded for the safety and comfort of both residents and visitors.
- Easy-to-read, large-lettering LCD displays were placed at eye level in the elevators in two buildings (57 Orchard, Aurora; 125 Pugsley, Richmond Hill) which will assist seniors and those with visual disabilities.
- A storage room at 468 Eagle Street, Newmarket, was converted into a fully-accessible washroom.





- The couches, chairs and tables in the lounge areas of several buildings have been replaced with furniture that is ergonomically designed to assist seniors and those with physical disabilities. For instance, the couches and chairs are sturdier with lower centres of gravity. The height design enables residents to get up more easily. The higher chair backs offer better back support and the seating is firmer to also help people get up more easily.
- The two sets of power operated doors at Keswick Gardens were being aligned to make it easier for people who have problems with mobility to enter and exit the building.
- The steep slope leading up to the front door at 57 Orchard Heights, Aurora, is being redesigned to make it more accessible.
- Architectural plans have been designed to help make 14 units at Hadley Grange fully accessible.

Continuing to Identify Barriers

Housing

- To reduce the waiting time for accessible or modified housing units, the Region is working with non-profit housing providers to determine whether the current individual waiting lists constitute a barrier and to explore the possibility of developing a single centralized waiting list for households requiring modified units without support services.

Health

- In 2005, Health Services staff will hold focus groups with people with disabilities to identify ways to make well water education packages more accessible. They will investigate the capability of the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to revise its Well Kit. They will investigate the ability of the provincial lab to provide 'over the phone/automated' results to persons with disabilities including TTY.

Moving Forward in 2005: **Barriers that Will be Addressed**

- The Region, in partnership with the City of Vaughan, will develop up to 60 new affordable units for seniors by 2006. Five percent of the units and all the public areas of the building will be fully accessible.
- Fourteen units at Hadley Grange will be renovated through 2007 to assist seniors who require more accessible accommodation.
- The Region is developing transitional housing for youth in Sutton in cooperation with the Town of Georgina. The Sutton project will include many accessibility features for people with disabilities. Transitional housing gives people a safe and stable place to live until they get back on their feet.
- By the end of 2005, York Region will develop:
 - detailed inventory of modified and supported housing units in the region;
 - complete document of the information people must provide to ensure they are offered units that meet their specific needs;
 - comprehensive list of the renovations and upgrades required to remove barriers from all Housing York Inc. properties.

2. Making it Easier to Move Around the Region

Accessibility Achievements

In 2004, York Region worked hard to make travel within the region easier and more accessible. This involved significant changes to transit vehicles and equipment; sidewalks and roadways; and the way York Region Transit communicates with riders.

For example:

Vehicles and Equipment

- The Region bought three new low floor Mobility Plus buses and 12 new low floor accessible conventional buses. Mobility Plus vehicles include minivans, buses and taxi sedans and all are fully accessible. About 60% of

conventional buses are now equipped with features such as low floors, ramps, and grab bars that make it easier for everyone - including seniors and people with disabilities - to use the transit system. This number will reach 70% by the end of 2005 and all buses ordered in the future will be low floor accessible.

- Approximately 99% of the new conventional bus stops installed in 2004 are accessible. An accessible bus stop includes a paved surface and an even grade. Staff also completed an audit of Mobility Plus bus stops, and developed a plan to make them more accessible. (*note: it's difficult to make all bus stops totally accessible because in some industrial areas of the Region there are no sidewalks or intersections.)
- Staff also developed a preventive maintenance program for the ramps on all its vehicles (i.e. accessible conventional low floor buses, Mobility Plus buses, vans, taxi vans) to make sure the equipment is serviced regularly and works when it is needed. The responsibility for ramp maintenance is now part of the Region's performance contract with contractors who provide or operate many of these vehicles.
- The destination signs on the Region's conventional buses now use a larger font size and stronger contrasting colours so they are easier for all riders to read, including those with impaired or failing vision or colour blindness.

Sidewalks and Roadways

- To make it easier for pedestrians - particularly those in wheelchairs or pushing strollers - road crews that are replacing sidewalks are now contractually required where possible to provide temporary sidewalks with the kind of surface that will enable strollers and wheelchairs to pass smoothly.
- In the past, each municipality in York Region used its own standards for drop curbs at intersections and crosswalks; not all of which met the needs of people who use wheelchairs or other mobility aids and devices. The Region has sent a letter to all the local municipalities to propose a common standard for future construction.



Information and Communication

- Print information about Mobility Plus services is now available in a format that meets standards set by the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB).
- Teletypewriters (TTY) have been installed in the call centres for both conventional and specialized transit services to assist deaf people requesting transit information.

Continuing to Identify Barriers

- York Region Transit staff will review all transit terminals for any potential or future barriers. They will also identify barriers that make it more difficult for people who are blind or have impaired vision to use the transit system (i.e. not being able to identify bus stops; problems using ticket vending machines; not being able to determine when buses are arriving at a stop).

Moving Forward in 2005: Barriers that Will be Addressed

- In 2005, York Region Transit will make a number of changes designed to improve Mobility Plus services, including introducing new performance based contracts for companies that provide Mobility Plus services. Contractors will be expected to run on time, provide better quality service, and have better training in interacting with seniors and persons with disabilities.
- Software now used to schedule Mobility Plus trips will also be improved, and staff will be given increased software training.
- Improvements will also make it easier for Mobility Plus customers to travel into Toronto: York Region will provide service to three accessible subway stations (Finch, Downsview, Don Mills) and will also provide cross boundary service to certain locations (to be determined) south of Steeles Avenue and north of Highway 401.
- All conventional transit service operating during off-peak hours will be accessible by mid 2005 (the whole fleet will be accessible by 2011). Priority seating signs (for seniors and people with disabilities) will also be installed on all conventional buses in 2005.

3. Making Regional Services More Accessible

Accessibility Achievements

The Region completed a number of initiatives designed to make it easier for all residents to access Regional services, including changing how some programs and services are delivered; finding better ways to communicate with everyone who use services; and making physical changes to some buildings and equipment.

Programs and Services

- Several changes have been made to make the Prenatal Education Program more accessible to parents with disabilities. For example, this Program is now available in accessible locations and may be offered in one-to-one teaching sessions if circumstances are appropriate. The program will also arrange TTY and sign language interpretation, if required.
- To make the information easier for all participants to understand, public health staff have enhanced the Prenatal Education Program by using more posters, charts, videos and other visual aids.
- Handouts and presentations for the Falls Prevention Program have been redesigned to make it easier for seniors to understand. For example, presentations and handouts use larger print and contrasting colours. Workshop presenters use microphones, and information is presented both orally and visually at the same time.
- Social Assistance staff compiled an inventory of accessible programs and/or services for staff to use as a tool for employment planning with persons with disabilities.
- The Social Assistance Division now provides most of the program and services for clients who are applying to the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) out of one office (Georgina) to provide clients with a single point of contact instead of being required to travel between different offices to get what they need. Clients and agencies are being surveyed about this change and the results will be used to plan future services.
- To help people with disabilities develop the computer skills they need to participate in employment programs, the Georgina Social Assistance office installed a clearly marked, accessible computer workstation that includes an adjustable workstation and large screen computer monitor.

The work station is used frequently and has led to the decision to install accessible workstations in the other three Social Assistance offices in York Region in 2005.

- All community forums organized by York Regional Police are held in accessible locations.

Information and Communications

To make information about the Region and its services more accessible to people with different types of disabilities, the following changes have been made:

- Graphic standards have been revised so all regional publications and materials will become easier to read for people with visual impairments.
- A focus group with people who have visual impairments was conducted by the Region to review its web site and recommend ways to make it more accessible. At present, all material on the web site can be magnified up to 16 times.
- The staff responsible for posting information on the web site received training that will make the site more accessible; as a result, existing pages have been revised to assist those with visual disabilities. The interactive maps on the web site have been redesigned with larger fonts and contrasting colours to make them easier to use. For example, to help people who are colour blind, maps no longer use the colours red and green.
- The Region's web site is now easier to access by people with visual impairments using JAWS screen-reading software.
- The Community Services and Housing Department used a software program to assess whether its web pages could be read by people with visual impairments. As a result, all print materials are now in a larger font (ie. 14 point instead of 12).
- York Regional Police now provide information for victims of crime in a variety of formats, including printed and electronic versions and have reviewed all their printed brochures and web site information for accessibility.

Buildings and Equipment

- An accessibility study of the Regional Administrative Centre - which included a tour and assessment by the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee - has now been completed and a list of accessibility changes will be made in order of priority.



- Power assisted doors were installed at the Court entrance in the South Services Centre, and the counter was lowered to make it wheelchair accessible.
- Two existing, ground floor washrooms in the regional offices at 62 Bayview Parkway were redesigned into one completely accessible unisex washroom.
- The new Paramedic Response Stations in King City, Markham (Riviera), Mount Albert and Richmond Hill were built with wider corridors, accessible washrooms, lounges, kitchens and offices. Further additions included highly visible outdoor signs, non-slip floors in the garage areas, and tile floors in crew areas for wheelchair access.
- The Emergency Medical Services (EMS) ambulances and paramedic response vehicles installed features that make them easily identifiable to the public. These features include a highly visible decal on all vehicles, bright fluorescent lights inside the ambulances, and strobe exterior emergency lights. Emergency personnel now have “YORK EMS PARAMEDIC” in large print on uniform t-shirts and jackets.



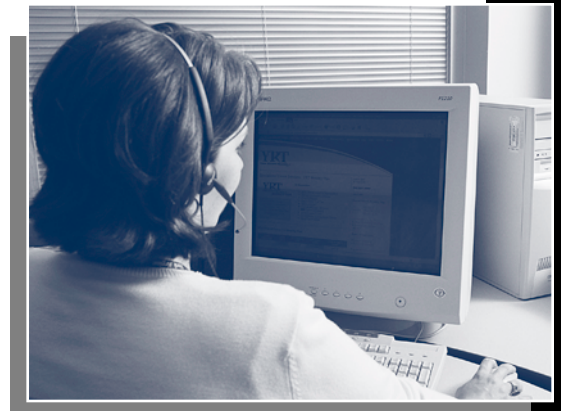
- The Transportation and Works Department has modified the design of the Public Education Centre at the new Material Recovery Centre (to be built on Bales Drive) to ensure that everyone, including those who use mobility aids, can use the Centre.
- York Regional Police have reviewed all plans for new construction, existing facilities and renovation projects to enhance accessibility.

Continuing to Identify Barriers

Programs and Services

- York Regional Police will review their policies on dealing with a traumatized person or victim of a crime and communicating with people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing at any incident attended by police. They will also assess the written forms they use to collect information from the public, such as Criminal Incident Information and the Victims of Crime Impact Statement, to identify any barriers to people with disabilities.

- Community Services and Housing staff will survey clients with disabilities about their experience using the Contact Centre, and determine whether Ontario Works resource centres are accessible to all residents. They will also review the policies, practices and documents used in the social assistance appeal process.
- Health Services will work with care providers and hold focus groups in the community to find alternative methods to distribute influenza immunization vaccine to ensure that elderly people or individuals who have difficulty attending community clinics receive vaccinations.
- To ensure that various public workshops such as the Prenatal Education Program and the Falls Prevention Program are more accessible for people with physical disabilities, Health Services staff will further assess the locations used for the classes. Promotional material for the classes will provide clear indication about the physical accessibility of the workshop sites. As part of the workshop evaluations, participants will be asked to rate the location's accessibility, and that information will be used to plan future classes.
- To make prenatal education more accessible, Health Services staff will promote awareness of classes to people who are deaf, deafened and hard of hearing; during registration they will now ask about the need for TTY or sign language interpretation and arrange for the services to be available at the required location.



Information and Communication

- The Region continues to look for better ways to communicate with people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing. It will investigate training procedures so that staff can communicate with citizens who use TTY technology.
- Corporate Communications will determine the feasibility for the Region to provide communication materials in different formats, such as MP3 technology (audio), large print, Braille (print), CD, DVD (packaging).
- Accessibility standards for computers supplied by the Region and used by the public will be developed to include a list of recommended assistive technology products that departments can select to make information more accessible to the public.
- Information Technology Services will investigate the possibility of implementing corporate TTY technology (software and hardware) that can allow staff to communicate directly with citizens using TTY equipment.

- The on-line directory for YorkLink will be reviewed to ensure that the information provided about community services available is pertinent to those with accessibility needs and that accessibility standards are met for on-line information.
- York Regional Police will continue its review of the forms commonly used by Police to convey information to the public for any potential barriers.
- The Region's Long Term Care and Seniors Programs will develop phone services that make it easier for seniors to immediately contact a staff person, particularly at the Maple Health Centre.
- Written materials sent to parents of school aged children from Health Services Dental, Nutrition and School Services Division will be reviewed to assess literacy level and to ensure font size, font type and use of colour to promote readability.



Buildings and Equipment

- York Region will assess the flooring and signage at the Regional Administrative Centre to see if changes are needed. (i.e. sign location and height, type size, floor texture and colour).
- All facilities owned or leased by York Region that house Regional programs will be reviewed for possible barriers and ways to remove them. If there are barriers in

leased facilities, the Region will attempt to negotiate improvements with landlords and work towards new lease agreements that will help ensure barrier-free buildings.

Moving Forward in 2005: **Barriers that Will be Addressed**

Programs and Services

- By the end of 2005, Community Services staff will have made a number of changes designed to help people with disabilities to participate in the Ontario Works program in the region.
- The format for the presentation about Ontario Works services will be modified to make the information more accessible for people with sensory

and cognitive disabilities. The Region will also produce a new easy-to-read pamphlet about the Ontario Works program.

- During the initial Ontario Works application interview, staff will ask applicants a number of supportive, non-invasive questions about their communication or physical needs that will help identify better ways to support people with disabilities in the workplace - particularly those with invisible disabilities. Accessible computer work stations will be installed in all Social Assistance offices.
- Health Services staff will work with visually impaired individuals and relevant organizations such as the CNIB to create workshops to ensure that falls prevention information reaches people with visual impairments.
- York Region Transit services will work with health and social service agencies to improve transportation to public programs within the region.

Information and Communication

- The Region and all its departments will continue to upgrade and enhance the web site to ensure all information is accessible for every on-line user.
- York Regional Police will review all signs, both in and outside police facilities, to make sure they can be easily read and readily understood by people with disabilities.
- The technology used at the 9-1-1 call centre will be enhanced so that every operator can handle a TTY call.
- The format and web site for the Regional Official Plan will be reviewed to ensure it is accessible to all residents.
- Lack of information about the accessibility of tourist attractions may deter many people with disabilities. The Region will gather information about the accessibility features of attractions in the area and include that information in its annually updated Visitors' Guide.



Buildings and Equipment

- By the middle of 2005, York Region Transit will prepare an inventory of accessible bus stops in York Region. Employees will also identify a process to improve street infrastructure that will make it easier for people with disabilities to use all transit facilities throughout the region.



- At the Administrative Centre:
 - power operators will be installed on four more ground-floor washroom doors as well as two more doors leading from the elevators to the parking garage.
 - automatic flush sensors will be installed in all accessible toilet cubicles, and thumb turn locks will be replaced with sliding bolts or door pulls.
 - the ramps between the elevators and the parking garage will be repainted, and railings will be installed along the ramps.
- more indoor parking spaces will be designated for people with disabilities.
- new flooring will be installed that will allow people to move more safely and easily through the building.
- more light fixtures will be installed in the elevators, and the elevators themselves adjusted to ensure the floors are level with each floor in the building.
- door frames will be painted in contrasting colours to make it easier for people to identify sections and move freely throughout the building.
- Improvements to the area outside the north entrance will include parking spaces reserved specifically for people with disabilities; parking spots will be wider and clearly designated while curb cuts and smoother, well-marked crosswalks will lead to the north entry doors. There will also be changes to the card reader entry system, an upgraded power-assist button, and extra lighting to assist seniors or persons with disabilities.
- To make it easier for participants to attend day programs at Maple Health Centre (and avoid traffic congestion) staff will develop guidelines and designate special areas to drop off and pick up people who are participating in day programs.
- The staff at the Maple Health Centre will consult with the Fire Prevention Officer and explore ways to improve the meeting space and hallway areas (including renovating the building) to safely accommodate the number of people in wheelchairs who attend day programs.

4. Making it Easier to Participate in Regional Government

Accessibility Achievements

There are several ways that people can participate in regional government: as employees or contractors for York Region, or as involved citizens who participate in the meetings and debate issues facing the regional government. Over the past year, the Region has made changes that make it easier for people to play a more active role in regional government.

Promoting Employment

- People interested in working for the Region can now call the fully operational York Region Career Line at 1-877-464-9675 Ext. 5508 for information about all positions. This means that people no longer have to come into a regional office to learn more about potential employment opportunities.
- York Regional Police have reviewed their human resource policies/procedures and identified the changes required to provide a more supportive working environment for existing employees who become disabled. One policy has already been changed - in the past, employees had to work on a site that was under the control of York Regional Police services; now they may work in other divisions of the regional government. To accommodate applicants who have physical or sensory disabilities, York Regional Police have designed a more accessible workspace area that is ergonomic and equipped with large computer screens.
- There is now an electronic bidding process that allows people to obtain on-line information regarding all contracts for the Region. This makes it easier for people to participate in the contracting process.



Promoting Participation

- The Planning and Development Services Department posts notices of all public meetings on the Region's web site. Accessibility criteria have also



been developed to hold meetings in accessible buildings served by transit (i.e. transit accessible), and provide for special need requirements.

- To help people who are hard of hearing participate in meetings, the Region is making greater use of sound systems, encouraging people to speak loudly and clearly, and writing information on overheads or flip charts.
- Some people with disabilities are unable to attend Council or Committee meetings. Using audio streaming between Council Chambers, Committee Rooms and the Seminar Room, the Region can now make it possible for people in all three rooms to listen to the proceedings of a meeting. This is the first step to broadcasting over the Region's web site in real time. The Region has also investigated providing teleconferencing services that would allow people to call in and listen to meetings.
- Corporate Services has studied accessibility to Council and Committee meetings and reviewed the Procedure By-law to determine any process barriers for people with disabilities.
- All Council and Committee materials and reports are now available in Verdana 16 upon request - the font type and size recommended by the CNIB.

Continuing to Identify Barriers

Staff will continue to assess the practices used to notify the public about Council and Committee meetings as well as to ensure that regional buildings are completely accessible to all citizens.

Moving Forward in 2005: Barriers that Will be Addressed

- The Human Resource Service job posting board was moved from inside the reception area to the outer hallway behind the elevator banks where it will be easier for the public to read. Self serve bins holding copies of job postings will be placed at the correct height for people in wheelchairs. When arranging interviews, it will be standard practice to ask applicants if they need any special accommodation.

- York Regional Police will review all testing and interviewing policies and remove any barriers to people with disabilities.
- The Region's purchasing department will provide its guide to procurement processes in Braille.

5. Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness

Accessibility Achievements

York Region recognizes that one step in creating a community where all residents "live, work, play and learn in healthy, accessible and safe neighbourhoods" is to transform attitudes and raise awareness of the issues facing people with disabilities. During 2004, the Region made great strides in changing how staff and service providers work together to remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities.

- The Region took a critical look at the language used to describe people with disabilities and accessibility issues in its documents and reports, and used *Word Choices, A Lexicon of Preferred Terms for Disability Issues* (developed by the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario) and *A Way with Words and Images* (from Social Development Canada) to update the Region's Corporate Writing Style Guide. Resources are available to help staff be more sensitive in their writing. The "language" of accessibility and disability is also being incorporated into sensitivity training for staff.
- Staff from across the Corporation attended a pilot training session on diversity and sensitivity - feedback from this event was used to plan future training sessions.
- Health Services management and staff participated in focus groups and surveys designed to assess their awareness of disability and accessibility issues and the ODA. Results will be used to develop future staff awareness training.
- The Community Services and Housing Department has already started to provide training for all social assistance staff on mental health, sleep disorders, learning disabilities and how to use TTY technology. Early Intervention Services staff have received training on sensory disabilities (for example hearing), autism and infant mental health, while Housing Services staff have attended training sessions designed to make them more sensitive to the impact that ageing has on abilities.

- York Region Transit has installed TTY capability in the call centres for both its Mobility Plus and conventional services.
- York Region Transit has established a sensitivity training program for contractors who provide Mobility Plus services. All new operating contracts for conventional transit service require drivers to receive sensitivity training, and the transit system is monitoring the impact of training on quality of service.
- Staff with York Regional Police who handle 9-1-1 calls have received training in TTY calls and how to ensure that callers are referred to appropriate services. They monitor the number of TTY calls they receive, and have regular contact with associations for the deaf, deafened and hard of hearing to continue to improve services for this community.



- First responders in York Regional Police have received special training to help them work with members of the public who may have special needs.
- Customer service representatives in the Transportation and Works Department receive training in strategies to provide service to customers with a wide range of disabilities.

Continuing to Identify Barriers

- Staff will review the *Here to Serve You* customer service newsletter to determine if there are more effective ways to share best practices in serving people with disabilities.

***Moving Forward* in 2005: Barriers that Will be Addressed**

- The Region and its departments will continue to provide sensitivity training for staff on disability issues. Community Services and Housing will focus on training related to addictions, adult mental health, the ODA, hearing impairment, physical accommodation, accommodating seniors, and literacy.

- Health Services will develop and test a staff training module in conjunction with other corporate training initiatives to give staff more information about the ODA and how to better serve customers and clients with disabilities.
- York Regional Police will work with mental health services to establish an enhanced Mobile Adult Crisis Team (i.e., a mental health worker and a law enforcement officer) to respond to calls or problems involving people with mental illness.



Conclusion

Finding ways to enhance the accessibility of Regional programs and services for people with disabilities is being carried out in partnership with Regional Council, Regional staff, members of the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee and York Region residents. The positive outcomes of this commitment are becoming apparent as new ways are being found to create better access for people with different types of disabilities to the Region's many programs and services and to regional government itself.

In October 2004, the provincial government introduced the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). The proposed legislation is intended to replace the existing ODA and includes provisions for the development of mandatory accessibility standards, compliance, and enforcement. The Regional Chair and CEO, and other representatives from York Region participated in the consultations for the development of the new legislation and many of the Region's suggestions are included in the proposed AODA.



If enacted, the new legislation will pave the way for uniform access for people with different types of disabilities across the province. York Regional Council remains committed to enhancing accessibility and making Regional programs and services easier to find, easier to access and easier to use for all residents. To achieve this, the Region will continue to work hard to implement its accessibility plans and pursue legislation that provides municipalities with the necessary tools to implement the new Act in a balanced and effective manner.

Implementing the accessibility initiatives in *Moving Forward*: York Region's 2005 Accessibility Plan, will bring the Region another step closer to fulfilling its vision of creating strong, caring and safe communities.



Department Accessibility Plans

Community Services and Housing

Corporate Communications Services

Corporate Services

Emergency Management Branch

Finance

Health Services

Planning and Development Services

Transportation and Works

York Regional Police

Community Services and Housing

Environmental Scan

Community Services and Housing will address the following issues:

Staff Training

- Provide training to staff to assist with awareness, identification, and solutions for York Region citizens with disabilities.

Information

- Work to remove barriers to information regarding services/programs and to increase and manage information for persons with disabilities.

Physical Barriers

- Work to make specific services/programs more physically accessible to persons with disabilities.

Our Customers

Housing Services Division

The Housing Services Division directly manages 1753 social housing units through the operations of Housing York Inc. The Division also administers over 6100 social housing units through independent non-profit and co-operative housing providers. The Division is also responsible for increasing the supply of affordable housing including the creation of new accessible units. The Region supports and funds a range of homelessness and prevention support programs in partnership with community agencies.

The demographics of our customers vary widely. We serve:

- People of all ages, including children, youth and seniors.
- People with diverse cultural backgrounds, many who are new to the country and have a mother tongue other than English.
- Households in financial need.
- Households in receipt of Ontario Disability Support Program payments, Old Age Pensions, Disability Pensions, etc.

- People facing a wide range of physical barriers.
- Households headed by those who have been victims of domestic violence.
- Households who require integrated community support services.

The needs of our customers are for housing that is:

- Affordable
- Safe and secure
- Appropriate in size and physical form
- Integrated with community support services

Assistance for our clients with disabilities includes:

- Providing a minimum of 326 accessible housing units throughout the region
- Incorporating barrier reduced design into new housing development.
- Seeking instances where retro fitting of existing properties can accommodate a wider range of clients who face physical barriers in their housing.
- Providing information to allow clients to better determine if available housing matches their need for barrier reduced accommodation.
- Liaising with community agencies that provide households with community support services.



Social Assistance Division

The Social Assistance Division provides financial and employment assistance to approximately 8300 residents annually (including adults and children). This comprises approximately 4300 family units.

The demographics of our customers vary widely. We serve:

- People in financial need, including those who are homeless.
- People of all ages, including children, youth and seniors.
- People with diverse cultural and religious backgrounds.
- Persons in receipt of Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP).
- Persons with a broad range of physical, sensory, and cognitive disabilities.

The needs of our customers are:

- Financial assistance for food, shelter, and additional expenses.
- Employment assistance that supports the participant's shortest route to employment.

Financial assistance available for persons with disabilities:

- All Ontario Works clients receive an Ontario Drug Benefit (ODB) card with their monthly social assistance cheque. The ODB card covers the costs of all prescription medications listed on the drug formulary.
- Ontario Works and ODSP clients with disabilities may be eligible to receive assistance with the cost of health-related items such as:
 - Mobility aids (i.e. walkers)
 - Foot orthotics
 - Vision and dental care
 - Prosthetic devices (i.e. hearing aids)
 - Home repairs or renovations (i.e. addition of ramps, grab bars in the shower)
 - Wheelchair repairs and batteries
 - Other eligible items as defined in policy

Employment assistance available for persons with disabilities:

- Ontario Works currently maintains a link with a range of agencies to assist persons with disabilities to prepare for employment.
- Persons with learning disorders have access to literacy and numeracy programs through Ontario Works referrals to community agencies.
- Volunteer placement and employment-based workshops, delivered at local Community Services and Housing offices, are physically accessible for persons with disabilities and those with mobility issues.
- One-on-one employment counselling is offered at all local Ontario Works offices to identify and address disabilities and barriers to employment.



Family and Children's Services Division

The Family and Children's Services Division provides financial assistance and/or direct developmental programming to approximately 5935 York Region children from birth to 12 years annually and 300 eligible adults residing in domiciliary hostels. This comprises approximately 4344 family units.

The demographics of our customers vary widely. We serve:

- Children from birth to 12 years of age.
- Families with diverse cultural and religious backgrounds.
- Families with an assessed financial need.
- Eligible adults residing in domiciliary hostels.
- Children with a broad range of diagnosed and undiagnosed physical, sensory, and cognitive disabilities.
- Licensed child care centres with children with special needs enrolled.
- Agencies delivering programs for children and families under the *Day Nurseries Act*, the *Child and Family Services Act*, the *Ontario Works Act*, and the *Lodging House By-law*.

The needs of our customers are:

- Financial assistance for child care and recreational costs, and enhanced inclusion support for children with exceptional special needs.
- Developmental programming to assist in the development of children with special needs and their inclusion into licensed child care centres and community settings.
- Information, intake, and access to programs and services in York Region.
- Financial assistance for domiciliary hostel costs.

Information, Intake and Access to Family and Children's Services Division



All requests for information, intake, and access for the following programs are accessed by calling the toll free 1-888-703-KIDS (5437) line:

- Child Care Fee Assistance
- Early Intervention Programs
- Preschool Speech and Language Program
- Tri-Regional Infant Hearing Program
- Child Care Support Line including a Child Care Translation Language telephone line
- Summer Camp Fee Assistance

The Division administers:

- Child care fee assistance for families with an assessed financial need with children enrolled in licensed child care, including those with special needs.
- Wage subsidy to enhance staff salaries within licensed child care programs.
- Enhanced funding to provide inclusion supports to children with exceptional special needs in licensed child care programs.

The Division provides direct service delivery for developmental programming. Early Intervention Services (EIS) provides:

- Developmental programming consultative supports for children with special needs in their homes, child care centres, community settings, and EIS offices.
- Occupational and Physio-therapy consultative services.

The Division manages the funding and program relationships with:

- Speech Language Pathology services through a contract with Markham Stouffville Hospital.
- In-home mobility, orientation, and developmental supports through a contract with Ontario Foundation for Visually Impaired Children.
- Seating clinic equipment support for children with physical disabilities through a contract with Southlake Regional Hospital.
- All Our Kids (AOK) Early Child Development and Parenting Programs.

The Division administers per diem agreements with domiciliary hostel operators for domiciliary hostel beds. The Division has responsibility to license domiciliary hostels under the Lodging House By-law and to monitor compliance under the By-law and per diem agreements.

Business Services Division

The Business Services Division ensures fiscal and administrative integrity within the Department. The Division co-ordinates the development of budgets and financial reporting, expenditure control and statistical reporting. Business Services manages its revenues and disbursements, directs quality assurance reviews for its programs, delivers staff training, and conducts program reviews.

The Division also manages the Department's administrative practices and provides program technology support to its three principal data management systems.

Our customers are Community Services and Housing Department employees, service providers, vendors, and department clients.



Policy and Program Support Services Division

The Policy and Program Support Services Division provides support to the Department, the corporation, and Regional Council through the provision of strategic policy analysis and program development services.

The Division also manages departmental emergency preparedness and business continuity planning; provides program communications services; produces YorkLink; co-ordinates the Region's ODA accessibility planning process and manages community investment, planning and program evaluation activities.

Our customers are primarily the Community Services and Housing Department, the corporation, and community service agencies.



Accessibility Statement

The Community Services and Housing Department will continue to move toward accessible programs, training, and information. The first step was the preparation of the 2004 Plan. Implementation is the main focus of the 2005 Plan.

Accessibility Achievements - 2003/2004

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
A review of staff training needs in relation to sensitivity training in providing services and information to people with disabilities revealed areas where training is required.	Communicational	All	Training needs for disability sensitivity training have been identified and some training has been provided. Social Assistance staff has received training on mental health, sleep disorders, using TTY technology and learning disabilities. Early Intervention Services staff have received training on hearing impairment, autism, and infant mental health. Sensitivity to seniors training is provided to Housing Services staff. A survey was conducted to determine training priorities for CS&H staff in 2005.
Review selected practices, policies, and documents to identify communication barriers including a review of: • Ontario Works application process • Child care fee assistance application process • Communication needs of Kids Line callers • Communications needs of Contact Centre callers • New or updated communication products for accessibility/barriers to sensory or cognitively disabled.	Communicational	All	As an outcome of an initial review of application and ongoing service, Social Assistance staff reviewed existing agencies and contacts in York Region, identifying accessible programs and/or services. This information will be compiled into a staff tool to be used for employment planning with persons with disabilities. The Social Assistance Division has centralized a number of functions in the Georgina office. Centralization of ODSP-related cases in the Georgina office provides a single point of contact for ODSP and ODSP-pending clients, and for community agencies providing services to ODSP clients. Initial agency response has been positive. Feedback from client surveys is being gathered to inform future decision-making. Department's web pages reviewed using auditing software and made necessary changes to ensure all information could be accessed by people with visual disabilities.

¹ Gives a description of the barrier and indicates where the barrier was found. For example was the barrier in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice or facility

² Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)

³ Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive or other)

⁴ Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier

Accessibility Achievements - 2003/2004

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
People with disabilities need access to computers and specialized computer training (including financial assistance for low income families) to participate in employment programs.	Physical Technological	Physical	The Georgina Social Assistance office implemented a pilot accessible computer workstation. Signage has been posted to identify work station as an accessible station. Feedback from the pilot workstation will inform future accessible workstation purchases for other offices.
A number of physical and architectural barriers in seniors residential housing complexes including: • Difficulties entering buildings for persons with mobility restrictions • Difficulties seeing in public areas of building due to reduced vision acuity • Difficulties using office furniture in lounge areas of buildings • Lack of accessible public washrooms • Out-of-date elevator designs.	Physical Architectural	Physical Sensory	A steep slope into the front door of the building at 57 Orchard Heights, Aurora is being re-designed. The positions of 2 sets of power operated doors at Keswick Gardens are being aligned to improve the path of travel into and out of the building. Public area lighting was upgraded at properties located at 190 Church Street, Keswick; 48 Wilson, Nobleton; and 76/78 Dunlop, Richmond Hill. Furniture replacement has taken place in several buildings to provide furniture that is ergonomically suited to persons with diminished physical agility and coordination. A storage room was converted into an accessible washroom with wide doorways and sufficient turning radius at 468 Eagle Street, Newmarket. Elevator cabs at 57 Orchard, Aurora and 125 Pugsley, Richmond Hill have been upgraded to provide eye level LCD displays with large lettering.
Font size for printed material being sent to seniors was too small.	Communicational	Sensory	The standard for print material sent to senior residents was changed from 12 font to 14 font.

¹ Gives a description of the barrier and indicates where the barrier was found. For example was the barrier in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice or facility

² Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)

³ Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive or other)

⁴ Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier

Barrier Identification for 2005

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing ⁵ (When will this be completed)
Access to Contact Centre for persons with disabilities.	Survey disabled clients.	4th quarter 2005
Determine the willingness of non-profit housing providers to create a centralized waiting list for households requiring modified units without support services.	In the absence of regulatory change, initiate discussions with non-profit housing providers regarding transfer of modified unit waiting list responsibility to a centralized waiting list.	2nd quarter 2005
Review policies, practices, and documents to identify barriers in the social assistance appeal process.	Use existing resources and partnerships to facilitate a review of the Ontario Works appeal process. Conduct client surveys.	4th quarter 2005
Review accessibility of Ontario Works resource centres.	Conduct accessibility reviews of all employment resource centres in local offices and assess needs for any accessibility changes.	4th quarter 2005
Review usability and accessibility standards for on-line information found in the YorkLink directory/web site.	Screen reader/auditing software.	1st quarter 2005
Review writing standards in program communications to improve usability and accessibility.	Plain language standards.	1st quarter 2005

⁵ The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2005.
The nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department.

Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2005

Barrier Identified ⁶	Barrier Type ⁷	What will be gained by removing or preventing this barrier? ⁸
Need to continue to provide effective staff training to effectively promote services and information to persons with disabilities.	Attitudinal Policy/Practice Informational Communicational	Promote enhanced knowledge of disability issues and more effective service.
Need to review and revise the current employment information presentation given to all Ontario Works applicants as part of the second stage application process.	Informational	Increased knowledge about the Ontario Works program.
Based on a review completed on the Ontario Works application process, access needs for persons with disabilities, particularly for those with non-visible disabilities, is not easily identified by staff.	Policy/Practice	Increase staff knowledge attained in a supportive, non-invasive way, to identify people's service needs and potential barriers related to disability issues in order to better serve them.
An accessible computer workstation is currently only available in one Social Assistance office.	Policy/Practice Technological	Enable people with physical and/or sensory disabilities to use accessible computer workstations for job search and other activities at more than one location.
An accessible information brochure for the Ontario Works program is currently not available in York Region.	Informational	Increased understanding of the Ontario Works program.
Awareness of TTY service at Contact centre.	Communicational	Improved customer service.
Need to develop affordable accessible rental housing units for frail seniors and adults with disabilities.	Physical	Addition to the inventory of social housing units available to those with disabilities.

⁶ Indicate where the barrier was found. For example: was it in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice, or facility?

⁷ Indicate the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice).

⁸ Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier.



Means to prevent/remove the barrier ⁹	Indicators of success ¹⁰	Timing ¹¹ (When will this be completed)
Sensitivity training. Topics to include: addictions, adult mental health, ODA orientation, hearing impairment, physical accommodation, seniors accommodation, literacy.	Training courses introduced and all direct service staff trained.	4th quarter 2005
Revisions will be made to the overall format of the employment information presentation to enhance communication of information for people with sensory and cognitive disabilities.	Review of the employment information presentation completed and revisions made as appropriate.	3rd quarter 2005
Supportive, non-invasive questions will be developed and incorporated into the application interview to help identify how to better support persons with disabilities in ongoing work, i.e., communication, environmental concerns, etc.	Questions incorporated and asked in the initial interviews.	4th quarter 2005
Complete a review of best practices based on feedback gathered from the first pilot workstation. Implement accessible computer workstations in all other Social Assistance offices.	Accessible computer workstations installed in the employment resource centres of all Social Assistance offices.	4th quarter 2005
Develop a new easy to read information pamphlet about the Ontario Works program in York Region.	An information pamphlet completed and available for distribution.	3rd quarter 2005
Promotion of TTY number on brochures and publications.	Number of calls to TTY.	Ongoing
Development of up to 60 new, affordable units for seniors in partnership with the City of Vaughan. At least 5% of units will be fully accessible. The public areas of the building will be fully accessible as well.* Renovation and upgrade of 14 units at Hadley Grange seniors building in Aurora to accommodate frail seniors. <i>*Note - "This project is carried forward from 2004 plan due to development delays"</i>	Housing additional households of persons with disabilities.	2006 2005 to 2007

⁹ Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier.

¹⁰ Indicate how customer service will be improved by removing or preventing this barrier. Also indicate any other measure(s) that will be used to determine whether or not the department was successful in removing and/or preventing this barrier.

¹¹ The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2005; the nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department.

Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2005

Barrier Identified ⁶	Barrier Type ⁷	What will be gained by removing or preventing this barrier? ⁸
Need to provide greater accessibility services for households requiring transitional housing.	Physical	The ability to serve those facing physical barriers in need of transitional housing.
Need to create centralized source of information regarding special needs units within the social housing portfolio.	Informational	Clients will be better able to determine the suitability of units made available to them.
Need to create a comprehensive inventory of the renovations and upgrades which could be made to Housing York Inc. properties to remove barriers.	Informational	The ability to address barriers in York Housing Inc. properties in a planned and coordinated fashion.
Continue to review web pages to identify potential barriers for persons with disabilities.	Informational Technological	Improved access to on-line information.
Provide print communications in on-line format (PDF).	Informational Technological	Improved access to information about programs and services via on-line format and screen reader software.

⁶ Indicate where the barrier was found. For example: was it in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice, or facility?

⁷ Indicate the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice).

⁸ Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier.



Means to prevent/remove the barrier ⁹	Indicators of success ¹⁰	Timing ¹¹ (When will this be completed)
Development of an accessible transitional housing unit in a project in Sutton.	Serving households requiring transitional housing with accessible features.	End of 2005
Confer with housing providers, disabled individuals and support agencies to develop a list of the information required for special needs applicants to assess the suitability of modified or supported units. Engage a consultant to compile a detailed inventory of modified units in the social housing portfolio.	The number of special needs units which are rented which match the needs of the clients needing them.	2nd quarter 2005 3rd quarter 2005
Engage a consultant to identify those modifications to be made.	Staff will be better able to incorporate upgrades and renovations into multi-year capital planning to ensure continuously improved access for clients.	End of 2005
Use of auditing and screen-reader software.	Improved accessibility and customer service.	Ongoing
Use of Adobe Acrobat.	Improved accessibility and improved customer service.	Ongoing

⁹ Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier.

¹⁰ Indicate how customer service will be improved by removing or preventing this barrier. Also indicate any other measure(s) that will be used to determine whether or not the department was successful in removing and/or preventing this barrier.

¹¹ The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2005; the nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department.

Corporate Communications Services

Environmental Scan

Departments will continue to look for Corporate Communications' guidance in the production of publications and information posted on the web site

Our Customers

Corporate Communications serves all departments as well as the media, the public, and a wide range of external clients.

Corporate Communications has the responsibility for the corporation's visual identity, including setting graphic standards for corporate publications, signage, advertisements, correspondence and the web.

The branch does not provide specific services that are targeted at persons with disabilities, it provides a corporate service. Communication policies and/or standards that are set has an effect on departments, programs and services that may be targeted to people with disabilities. The web site was designed, however, with those with visual impairments in mind.

Accessibility Statement

Corporate Communications has incorporated many accessibility features to the web to better serve those with visual impairments, and will keep abreast of new technologies while maintaining and fine tuning the Region's web site as required. Staff responsible for posting/updating department web pages will continue to be trained on accessibility web features as technology changes and as new staff are hired.

Corporate Communications will continually review its graphic standards for publications to ensure they are user-friendly for people with disabilities.



Accessibility Achievements - 2003/2004

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
Ongoing maintenance and training to ensure York Region's web site continues to be accessible for people with visual impairments.	Informational Technological	Physical Sensory	• Staff responsible for posting information on the web were trained to ensure accessibility features were added to all existing pages on the York Region web site and that they are included when adding new pages of information. As of August 2004, training was completed and most web pages were fully accessible. • An on-line training program about the Region's accessibility was developed and posted on the intranet for easy access and reference by staff. • A focus group of people with visual impairments reviewed the site and completed an on-line survey. Feedback and suggestions for change to be incorporated in 2004/2005 where feasible. • An addendum to the Region's visual identity standards was completed which includes graphic standards that take into consideration people with disabilities, particularly visual impairments.
Some written references in the Region's reports and publications to persons with disabilities were not politically correct.	Attitudinal	All	• Adopted the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario's <i>Word Choices</i>, <i>A Lexicon of Preferred Terms for Disability Issues</i> and Social Development Canada's <i>A Way with Words and Images</i>, <i>Suggestions for the portrayal of persons with disabilities</i> as resources and reference for York Region staff. • <i>Word Choices</i> and <i>A Way with Words and Images</i> have been incorporated in the Region's Corporate Writing Style Guide. These resources were also referenced in the Human Resource Services' pilot sensitivity training sessions for employees.

¹ Gives a description of the barrier and indicates where the barrier was found. For example was the barrier in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice or facility

² Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)

³ Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive or other)

⁴ Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier

Barrier Identification for 2005

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing ⁵ (When will this be completed)
Corporate Communications will continually review its web access to identify barriers for persons with disabilities.	Feedback and survey results from web site review by focus group of people with visual impairments.	Ongoing
Corporate Communications will investigate the feasibility of providing alternate formats for communications materials and ways to disseminate upon request.	Work with departments to explore options and feasibility.	2005



⁵ The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2005.
The nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department.

Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2005

Barrier Identified ⁶	Barrier Type ⁷	What will be gained by removing or preventing this barrier? ⁸	Means to prevent/remove the barrier ⁹	Indicators of success ¹⁰	Timing ¹¹ (When will this be completed)
Using findings from the 2004 focus group feedback, external accessibility services and the W3C Consortium (standard for the world wide web), Corporate Communications will further improve and maintain web access for persons with visual impairments.	Informational Technological	Further improved access to York Region information and services.	Align further strategies with new and evolving technologies.	Higher level of web access for people with visual impairments.	Ongoing

⁶ Indicate where the barrier was found. For example: was it in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice, or facility?

⁷ Indicate the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice).

⁸ Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier.

⁹ Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier.

¹⁰ Indicate how customer service will be improved by removing or preventing this barrier. Also indicate any other

measure(s) that will be used to determine whether or not the department was successful in removing and/or preventing this barrier.

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Corporate Services

Environmental Scan

- Documentation of existing barriers within Regionally owned and leased facilities, for the purpose of prioritizing facilities and improving accessibility to all residents of York Region.
- Implementation of high priority recommendations to improve the accessibility of the Administrative Centre.
- Escalation in construction costs for renovations or new buildings.
- Review of council and committee processes to identify and remove barriers.
- Education component of the Customer Service Strategy to assist staff in providing excellent customer service to people with disabilities.

Our Customers

- Regional Chair and CEO, Members of Regional Council
- Police Services Board
- The public
- Regional employees
- Direct service departments
- Other municipal and government employees and agencies

Accessibility Statement

Corporate Services has focused its initial efforts on an accessibility pilot project to study the Regional Administrative Centre and identify and establish an action plan to improve its accessibility to all of the region's residents. In 2005, we will begin to implement some of the highest priority recommendations and establish a multi-year plan to address the study's findings. We will also begin a study on other owned and leased facilities which house Regional staff, to establish baseline accessibility information for prioritized facilities. We will not only review the physical nature of buildings, but also our policies, practices and procedures to ensure that all aspects relating to the design, construction, operation, maintenance, or leasing of Regional facilities, are focused on improving accessibility to all persons with disabilities.

We will continue to encourage diversity in hiring and Human Resources policy development. We will continue to review council, committee, legal, and court processes to identify and remove barriers that limit accessibility to these processes for people with disabilities, and continue to identify and reduce barriers and enhance and improve our work environment with a vision of a barrier free workplace for our customers.

Accessibility Achievements - 2003/2004

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
Numerous barriers identified at the Regional Administrative Centre.	Physical Architectural Technological Communicational	Physical Sensory Cognitive	Building tour completed and comments received from the Accessibility Advisory Committee. Consultant retained and thorough accessibility pilot study completed, which included an analysis of solutions implemented by other private and public sector organizations, barrier identification and a prioritized set of recommendations with related costs.
Court entrance at South Services Centre.	Architectural Physical	Physical	Power assisted doors were installed at the Court entrance.
Application table too high outside the Courts at the South Services Centre.	Architectural Physical	Physical	Counter was lowered to make it wheelchair accessible.
Washrooms not accessible on the ground floor at 62 Bayview Parkway.	Architectural Physical	Physical	The two existing washrooms were totally redesigned and renovated into one unisex washroom that is now totally accessible for disabled persons.
Conduct a pilot training session on diversity and sensitivity in serving persons with disabilities.	All	All	A pilot training session was held in October 2004 with staff from across the Corporation. Feedback was gathered for consideration of future sessions.
Braille Business Cards	Communicational	Sensory	Braille business cards are available from HRS staff and at the front office at Human Resource Services.
Career Line	Informational	Physical Sensory	York Region Career Line is fully functional with up to date information regarding all available positions. People can phone in to get job information.
Reviewed all Regional By-laws to assist Departments in identifying.	Informational	Physical Sensory Cognitive Other	Conducted inventory of all 4,200 Regional By-laws and presented it to the staff Committee.

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³ Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive or other)

⁴ Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier

Accessibility Achievements - 2003/2004

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
Reviewed Procedure By-law to determine any process barriers for people with disabilities.	Policy/Practice	Physical	Reviewed Procedure By-law and sought input from AAC members regarding amendments to remove process barriers.
Reviewed publication standards for Council and Committee Agendas and Reports.	Informational	Sensory	Determined that Verdana 16 is the preferred computer-generated font based on input from Canadian National Institute for the Blind and changed Clerk's processes to make Council and Committee materials available in Verdana 16 upon request. Also determined that all materials available on the Region's web site, can be magnified to 16 times the original font to meet the needs of people who experience loss of vision.
Studied accessibility to Council and Committee meetings in the Administrative Centre.	Technological	Physical Sensory	Provided cabling of audio streaming between Council Chambers, Committee Rooms and Seminar Room, as a first step to allow persons with disabilities to listen to Council and Committee proceedings over the Region's web site. Technological connections to the web site to be provided by Information Technology Services.
Customer service survey carried out by the Legal Department to identify any existing barriers in service delivery.	Informational	All types	Any discovered service delivery barriers were eliminated.

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³ Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive or other)

⁴ Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier

Barrier Identification for 2005

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing ⁵ (When will this be completed)
Establish baseline accessibility information on all other owned facilities which house Regional staff.	An accessibility consultant will be retained to review the facilities and provide recommendations and cost estimates for barrier removal in accordance with ODA.	2005
Review current leased facilities, leasing practices and standard lease agreements.	An accessibility consultant will be retained to inspect all leased facilities, identify existing barriers and investigate opportunities for improvements with landlords. Standard lease agreements will be reviewed to ensure that future leased facilities are reasonably barrier-free.	2005
Review existing flooring at the Administrative Centre.	Flooring study to be completed with a specific ODA component.	2005
Review existing signage at the Administrative Centre.	Signage study to be completed with a specific ODA component that will review sign location, height, contrast, type size, texture, colour and shape to ensure effective communication to all persons.	2005
Providing information updates on customer service best practices.	Review of Region's <i>Here to Serve You</i> customer service newsletter.	December 2005

⁵ The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2005.

The nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department.

Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2005

Barrier Identified ⁶	Barrier Type ⁷	What will be gained by removing or preventing this barrier? ⁸
Washroom and parking garage doors within the Administrative Centre.	Architectural Physical	Better accessibility to all washrooms and the parking garage for persons with disabilities.
Human Resource Services Job Board	Informational Physical	Easier access to the HRS Job Board.
Recruitment Process Interview Scheduling	Informational	Opportunity for job candidates to identify up front if accommodation will be required for the interview.
Inclusivity training for Regional staff.	Attitudinal	Will create a supportive environment for staff to better understand the needs of people with different types of disabilities.
Flooring at the Administrative Centre.	Physical Architectural	Will better allow those with sensory or physical disabilities to navigate the building.
North entrance, crosswalk and disabled parking spaces at the Administrative Centre.	Physical Architectural Policy/Practice	The building will be more easily accessible to those persons with a disability.

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⁸ Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier.



Means to prevent/remove the barrier ⁹	Indicators of success ¹⁰	Timing ¹¹ (When will this be completed)
Power operators will be added to 4 additional ground-floor washroom doors and 2 additional doors leading to the parking garage from the elevators. (Currently, only the middle bank of washrooms and elevators has power assisted doors). Additionally, indoor accessible parking spaces and the ramps between the elevators and the parking garage, will be repainted and additional railings will be installed along these ramps.	Allow for easier and safer access to ground floor washrooms and to the underground parking garage.	2005
Job posting board will be moved from inside HR reception to the outer hallway behind the elevator bank. Self serve bins with copies of the postings will be wheelchair accessible.	Allow easier and more convenient access to regional job postings for all persons.	2005
A question will be asked when interviews are initially set up "Do you require any accommodation for the interview?"	Feedback from job candidates.	2005
Training sessions will be held for Regional staff to raise awareness of the needs of people with different types of disabilities and to discuss ways that accommodation can be provided.	Staff awareness is raised and staff report having a better understanding of the needs of people with disabilities.	2005-2006
The design of the new flooring will incorporate a comprehensive review of criteria relating to materials, patterns, colours, textures, maintenance, cleaning, acoustics, longevity and value.	Well designed flooring will allow for safer and easier travel throughout the building, while ensuring that it will function well over the long term with regard to cleaning, maintenance and sustainability.	2005
A complete redesign of the area is required to include a sufficient number of wider and clearly demarcated disabled parking spaces, with incorporated curb cuts, a new, well-demarcated and smoother concrete surface path to the north entry doors. Additional changes to the entryway's card reader, power-assist button, lighting and trash can location should be implemented at the same time.	Sufficient and properly sized accessible parking spaces, with a clearly marked and better designed crosswalk area will allow for easier and safer entry to the building.	2005

⁹ Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier.

¹⁰ Indicate how customer service will be improved by removing or preventing this barrier. Also indicate any other measure(s) that will be used to determine whether or not the department was successful in removing and/or preventing this barrier.

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Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2005

Barrier Identified ⁶	Barrier Type ⁷	What will be gained by removing or preventing this barrier? ⁸
Elevators at the Administrative Centre.	Physical Architectural	The building will be more accessible and safer to those persons with disabilities.
Clarity of doorways in the Administrative Centre.	Architectural	Easier and safer navigation throughout the public areas of the building for disabled persons.
Washrooms at the Administrative Centre.	Physical Architectural	More accessible, functional and safer washrooms.
Customer Service Best Practices	Informational	Increase staff sensitivity to providing customer service to persons with disabilities.



⁶ Indicate where the barrier was found. For example: was it in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice, or facility?

⁷ Indicate the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice).

⁸ Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier.



Means to prevent/remove the barrier ⁹	Indicators of success ¹⁰	Timing ¹¹ (When will this be completed)
Provide additional light fixtures as lighting inside the elevators is not sufficient. Adjust elevators to ensure that elevator floor is level with each storey's landing.	Allow for safer and more comfortable use of the building's elevators for all persons.	2005
Paint doorframes in a contrasting colour.	Will make all doors clearly visible by being in contrast with the adjacent walls.	2005
Provide automatic flush sensors for toilets in all accessible cubicles, and replace thumb turn locks with slide bolt hardware and provide or re-locate door-pulls as required.	Will help make washrooms safer and more usable for all.	2005
Prepare articles for the Region's <i>Here to Serve You</i> customer service newsletter.	An article in each issue of <i>Here to Serve</i> .	December 2005

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Emergency Management Branch

Environmental Scan

Our goal is to develop a plan to assist organizations to achieve and implement the main principle underlying the ODA that is — people with a disability should be able to experience and enjoy the same fundamental rights as the rest of the community. The development of a Strategic Plan to achieve this goal will be accomplished through a communicative process with stakeholders within the Corporation and with those agencies and individuals actively involved in the disability sector.

Our Customers

- Citizens of York Region
- Regional Departments
- York Regional Police
- Area Municipalities
- District School Boards
- District Health Council and Community Care Access Centre
- Conservation Authorities
- York Region Community Safety Village
- Municipal Electrical Utilities
- Other critical service providers

Accessibility Statement

The purpose of our Plan is to provide the framework within which to: align the goals of York Region's organizations with the Region's Emergency Management Program responsibilities and the goals of the ODA; enable the Emergency Management Branch to fulfill its social obligations as required by the ODA and the Region's Corporate Disability Strategy; and, ensure the needs of people with a disability are considered in future emergency planning activities.

Accessibility Achievements - 2003/2004



Planning was initiated in the Emergency Management Branch in consultation with the Community Services and Housing and Health Services Departments to coordinate several small focus group meetings with groups that represent and provide support to people with disabilities to identify the unique preparedness and response needs of people with disabilities.

Barrier Identification for 2005

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing ⁵ (When will this be completed)
Region and other key stakeholders emergency plans & procedures	The Branch will: • communicate with area municipalities, Regional Departments, representatives of home based-care agencies, residential healthcare facilities, emergency responders and advocacy groups for people with disabilities through a series of focus group meetings. • work with local disability organizations to identify personal emergency preparedness education requirements. • involve people with disabilities and other Regional Departments in the emergency plan needs assessment process.	2005/2006

⁵ The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2005.

The nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department.

Environmental Scan

- Using technology to enhance public access to Regional staff and Regional material on York Region's web site.
- Reviewing our interactions with vendors, suppliers and bidders to maximize accessibility.

Our Customers

- Council
- Residents of York Region
- Direct Service departments in York Region
- Regional staff
- Development Industry
- Vendors, suppliers and bidders in public procurement processes
- Area municipalities

Accessibility Statement

We will continue to look at the services we deliver and the processes we manage, with a view to continually improve service quality and accessibility. We will accomplish this through a multi-year plan aligned with the Region's strategic goal of improving service accessibility for all regional residents.



Accessibility Achievements - 2003/2004

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES: All clients are not able to attend council or committee meetings.	Communicational	Physical, Sensory, Other	Investigated teleconferencing services to allow clients to call-in and listen to council and committee meetings.
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES: Some clients find it difficult to use a push button phone.	Technological	Physical, Sensory	Investigated the possibility of enabling voice activated technology to allow citizens to interact with the Region's auto-attended and voice mail systems using their voice.
SUPPLIES AND SERVICES: Review of Purchasing By-law #A-0304-2002-031.	Communicational	Other	Amending the by-law to incorporate ODA requirements where applicable.
SUPPLIES AND SERVICES: Contract distribution available to only those who could physically appear at counter.	Communicational/	Physical	Commenced on electronic process that makes bid information available on-line so that individuals do not physically have to appear at Supplies and Services counter.

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Barrier Identification for 2005

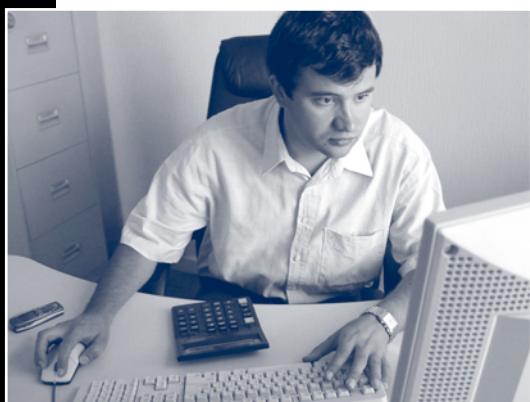
By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing ⁵ (When will this be completed)
Technological Barrier - Investigate the possibility of implementing corporate TTY technology (software and hardware) to allow staff to communicate directly with citizens who use TTY equipment.	Consult with the Canadian Hearing Society, HP Canada, and Microsoft Canada.	2005



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The nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department.

Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2005

Barrier Identified ⁶	Barrier Type ⁷	What will be gained by removing or preventing this barrier? ⁸
SUPPLIES AND SERVICES: Accessibility of the procurement process to all York Region residents.	Information	For use by people who are visually impaired.
SUPPLIES AND SERVICES: No formal mechanism to factor in compliance with ODA legislation when evaluating responses to York Region RFPs and tenders.	Potentially all types of barriers	Compliance with ODA legislation where relevant.



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⁸ Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier.



Means to prevent/remove the barrier ⁹	Indicators of success ¹⁰	Timing (When will this be completed) ¹¹
Have guide printed in Braille.	Number of copies used for this purpose.	March 2005
Formal component in the RFP/tender evaluation process methodology to score compliance with ODA legislation where relevant.	Where it is deemed relevant by the business, 100% of RFP/tender response evaluations incorporate the ODA legislation compliant scoring component.	September 2005

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Health Services

Environmental Scan

The Health Services Department provides programs and services to a wide variety of clients including those who are temporarily or permanently disabled. As management and staff deal with accessibility issues on a daily basis, it is no wonder that the Health Services Department continues to create many achievements in the areas of identification and removal of barriers for persons with disabilities. The challenge for the Department is to continue to be innovative and proactive in providing and modifying our many programs and services so that they are accessible to all our client groups.

Our Customers

All Branches of the Health Services Department work together to promote, protect and enhance the health and safety of the people of York Region. The Health Services Department serves a variety of clients including York Region residents of all age groups, the general public and health care professionals.

Many of the services, even a majority of the services, provided by our three operational Branches (Emergency Medical Services, Long Term Care and Seniors and Public Health) are offered to persons with disabilities. They include direct health care service, health education and health promotion, emergency and non-emergency medical response, family and children's health programs, immunization services, prevention and management of infectious diseases, environmental health, health protection, community outreach and long term care programs and services.

Accessibility Statement

The Health Services Department will identify barriers and implement strategies to increase accessibility on an ongoing basis. The focus of the Health Services Department in 2005 will be to assess the physical locations of our classes and workshops; to make physical and practice improvements to our facilities ensuring that persons with disabilities can fully participate in our programs; and to pilot test an awareness training module for Health Services staff regarding the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, accessibility issues and available resources.

Accessibility Achievements - 2003/2004

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
Decreased awareness of Health Services Department staff regarding the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, accessibility issues and available resources.	Informational Communicational Attitudinal Policy/Practice	Physical Cognitive Sensory	- Focus groups were conducted with a sample of Health Services management and staff during 2004. - Subsequently, a Staff Awareness Survey related to accessibility issues and the Ontarians with Disabilities Act was developed and administered to approximately 500 Health Services staff. - Results will be used to develop appropriate awareness training for Health Services staff.
Access to Health Services prenatal education for clients with physical disabilities.	Communicational Policy/Practice	Sensory Physical	- Sign language interpretation was arranged for clients who required the service to participate fully in prenatal classes. - The options of one-to-one teaching sessions or sessions at accessible locations closer to home were offered to clients with mobility impairments. Individual transportation issues were also addressed.
Difficulty in understanding the overall message contained in handouts, displays and the video and audio components of Falls Program workshops.	Technological Communicational	Sensory	- Larger print and improvements in colour contrast were incorporated into handouts, PowerPoint and overhead presentations. - The use of microphones at workshop sessions was increased. - Provided more than one method simultaneously for communicating the message (visual and auditory).
Content and messaging was difficult to understand in a number of classes and workshops offered by the Public Health Branch. (e.g. prenatal, falls program, etc.)	Communicational	Cognitive	- The content and the delivery of program content was modified to address the needs of clients with comprehension difficulties. - Delivery was provided on an individual basis when required and was augmented with a number of visual teaching tools (charts, posters, and videos) as appropriate.

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⁴ Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier

Accessibility Achievements - 2003/2004

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
Accessibility issues for staff and members of the public attending educational programs at Paramedic Response Stations.	Architectural	Primarily Physical	New Paramedic Response Stations in King City, Markham (Riviera), Mount Albert and Richmond Hill have accommodated: • Wider corridors in the facilities. • Accessible washrooms, lounge, kitchen and offices. • High visibility outdoor signage. • Non slip floors in garage area.
Improvement required in the visibility, accessibility and identification of services provided by Emergency Medical Services.	Technological Communicational	Primarily Sensory	• Launch of a new high-visibility decal package for EMS ambulances and paramedic response vehicles. • Fluorescent lights installed in ambulances to provide increased light. • Ambulance exterior emergency lights upgraded to a strobe lighting system. • Ambulance stretchers upgraded to 35P proflxxx which are lighter and easier to handle. • Installation of state of the art 'Nederman' diesel exhaust emissions systems in all new paramedic response stations. • Uniforms printed with YORK EMS PARAMEDIC in large print (e.g. T-shirts and jackets/coats) to assist with the identification and visibility of paramedics particularly at public events.
Limited number of accessible apartments at Hadley Grange.	Physical Architectural	All	• The project to renovate 14 apartments to be physically accessible at Hadley Grange supportive housing site is in the second year of a three year plan. • In 2004, \$35,000 was received from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to hire an architect for the project.

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Barrier Identification for 2005

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing ⁵ (When will this be completed)
Access to universally funded influenza vaccine for York Region seniors who experience difficulty leaving their homes to attend a community based immunization clinic.	Needs assessment developed and implemented through focus groups targeting seniors, their families and professional caregivers.	Needs assessment to be developed and conducted during 2005. Program modifications to be implemented in 2005-2006 flu season.
Physical accessibility to prenatal classes, falls prevention and school workshops.	- Assessment of physical accessibility of present locations and opportunities to change locations will be investigated and implemented as needed. - Availability of accessible locations for events/classes will be marketed. - Appraisal of accessibility of locations will become part of ongoing evaluations of the programs offered.	Assessment - 2005; Promotion and evaluation to commence in 2005 and will be ongoing.
Assess the accessibility of prenatal classes for persons who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.	- Promotion of accessibility of classes for people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing as above. - Assess the need for TTY and sign language interpretation at time of registration and arrange for service. - Evaluation of accessibility will become part of the class evaluation.	2005 Ongoing
Accessibility to Private Drinking Well Systems (PDWS) Education and Outreach Program; PDWS testing service; and retrieval of water test results from the MOHLTC Lab.	- Review and revise well water education package through focus groups to be able to service persons with disabilities. - Investigate the MOHLTC's capability to revise its Well Kit. - Review and revise Policies & Practices to provide well water testing for persons with disabilities. - Investigate ability of the provincial lab to provide 'over the phone/ automated' results to persons with disabilities including TTY.	To commence in 2005 and continue through 2006.

⁵ The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2005.

The nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department.

Barrier Identification for 2005

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing ⁵ (When will this be completed)
Readability of written materials sent to parents re: school programs.	• Consultation with internal communications resources to assess literacy level, and to ensure font size, font type and colour contrast promote readability.	2005 Ongoing
Ability to consistently reach a staff member when calling in to the Department's long term care and seniors programs.	• Through focus groups, determine the needs of the clients related to voice mail. • Apply communication standards (already developed) for communicating with seniors via telephone or voice mail. • Investigate options or alternatives to the current system.	To commence in 2005 Ongoing



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Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2005

Barrier Identified ⁶	Barrier Type ⁷	What will be gained by removing or preventing this barrier? ⁸
Decreased awareness of Health Services Department staff regarding the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, accessibility issues and available resources.	Informational Communicational Attitudinal Policy/Practice	Improved customer service and program delivery for persons with disabilities and their families/advocates.
Falls Prevention Program workshop content and delivery difficult for persons with visual impairments to see.	Informational	Improved customer service to persons with visual impairments.
Paramedic staff require improved access to stretchers in ambulances.	Physical	Increased ability of paramedic staff to move about an ambulance while providing care to clients.
Need for more Supportive Housing - Alternative Community Living Programs (ACLP) which provides essential homemaking and personal care to seniors and adults with physical disabilities in order for them to stay in the community and remain as independent as possible.	Physical Architectural	Additional Supportive Housing services will be provided to seniors and people with physical disabilities in currently underserved areas.

⁶ Indicate where the barrier was found. For example: was it in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice, or facility?

⁷ Indicate the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice).

⁸ Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier.



Means to prevent/remove the barrier ⁹	Indicators of success ¹⁰	Timing ¹¹ (When will this be completed)
Results of survey of Health Services Department staff conducted in 2004 will be used to develop a pilot awareness training module for the Department. Implementation of any training project for the Department will be in conjunction with corporate ODA training initiatives. A list of resources will be developed, compiled and made available to all staff.	Evaluation of staff knowledge pre and post training. Use of resource list by staff to address queries.	The pilot module will be tested in 2005. Plans for further implementation will be made following the conclusion of the pilot project. First draft of resource list will occur in 2005. On-going process.
Use the falls prevention workshop template in conjunction with visually impaired individuals and relevant organizations such as CNIB to create workshops for this specific audience.	Customized workshops for persons with visual impairments will be created.	2005
Trial of centre mounted stretcher ambulance vehicles (2) E450.	Care provided more quickly and efficiently, benefitting clients and paramedics.	2005
Health Services has submitted a proposal to MOHLTC for funding to provide a Supportive Housing Program to seniors and people who are physically disabled who will reside in the new development project in Vaughan. The site will include 60 new, affordable units for seniors, and will be developed in partnership with the Community Services and Housing Department and the City of Vaughan. Twenty units will receive the Supportive Housing Program if funding is approved. Health Services will continue to provide Supportive Housing services to those seniors and adults with physical disabilities who reside in the renovated units at the Hadley Grange seniors building in Aurora. Fourteen units in this building will be renovated and upgraded by the Community Services and Housing Department to accommodate frail seniors and adults with physical disabilities.	An additional 20 units will receive Supportive Housing services to help seniors and people with physical disabilities stay in the community and remain independent.	2006 2005 to 2007

⁹ Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier.

¹⁰ Indicate how customer service will be improved by removing or preventing this barrier. Also indicate any other measure(s) that will be used to determine whether or not the department was successful in removing and/or preventing this barrier.

¹¹ The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2005; the nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department.

Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2005

Barrier Identified ⁶	Barrier Type ⁷	What will be gained by removing or preventing this barrier? ⁸
Drop off zone for Day Programs at Maple Health Centre is congested with both individual transportation vehicles and mobility buses.	Architectural Physical	Easier access to and from vehicles when participating in the Day Programs at Maple Health Centre. Architectural guidelines for future programs.
The physical space for activities and in hallways is too small for the large number of wheelchairs and walkers used by Day Program participants at Maple Health Centre.	Architectural Physical	More space for programming and better flow of clients transitioning from one program space to another (Dependent on the proposed renovations by EMS at the Maple Health Centre). Emergency preventative planning.



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⁸ Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier.



Means to prevent/remove the barrier ⁹	Indicators of success ¹⁰	Timing ¹¹ (When will this be completed)
Specifically designated drop off/pick up areas for Day Program participants only. Develop written guidelines and requirements for future Day Programs when standards are available.	Designated drop off/pick up zones during selected hours. Joint planning regarding future renovations to Maple Health Centre.	Late 2004/2005. Development of architectural guidelines for future programs - to commence in 2005 with ongoing modifications.
Investigate physical mobility /cognitive status of program participants in regards to emergency procedures. Consult with Fire Prevention Officer for assessment of safety guidelines. Investigate the options of creating a larger program area with potential renovations to that section of the building.	Easier traffic flow in programming space. Day Program representative to participate on committees dealing with facility renovations. Written guidelines will be developed when standards are available.	Commence in 2005. Development of architectural guidelines for future programs - commence in 2005 with ongoing modifications.

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Planning and Development Services

Environmental Scan

The Planning and Development Services Department provides accessibility at public meetings by identifying and removing barriers where possible to remove and/or reduce physical, architectural, information and communication barriers. In addition, the Department ensures information and communication barriers are minimized through the wide array of publications and web application services that we provide.

Our Customers

Planning and Development Services Department customers and partnerships include Regional Council, the residents of York Region, Regional and area municipal politicians, other Regional departments, area municipalities, development industry, businesses of York Region, public agencies (such as school boards, health and safety organizations and conservation authorities) and human service providers.

Accessibility Statement

The Planning and Development Services Department commits to serving all of our customers to the best of our ability, taking into consideration their accessibility needs and our ability to address those needs. Where a barrier can be removed with existing resources - we plan to do so. When a barrier is identified that requires the co-operation of resources of another corporate department (i.e. Clerks Office, Property Services, etc.) we will work in partnership to minimize and/or eliminate barriers to access.



Accessibility Achievements - 2003/2004

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
Accommodation of people who are deaf, deafened, or hard of hearing at public meetings.	Communicational	Sensory	• Use of sound system(s). • Projecting speaking voice loudly and clearly. • Writing down information for visual impact.
Legibility of static maps .	Informational	Sensory	• Annotation of cartographic products produced in most legible and largest font possible. • Avoided the colours red and green on the same map, in consideration of people with colour blindness.
Access to maps and information.	Physical	Physical	• Interactive maps and information available on the web site e.g. York Explorer.
Accessibility of services.	Physical	Physical	• Included accessibility policies as part of the Regional Official Plan, i.e. promoting transit and accessibility.
Meeting notification and location selections.	Communicational Physical	Physical	• Include notification of public meetings on web site in compliance with ODA requirements. • Developed a list of accessibility criteria, held meetings at transit accessible locations, accessible buildings and provided special need requirements at various meetings.
Ease of access to Information on web site.	Technological Informational	Physical Sensory	• YorkAtlas icons, buttons and links, have alternate scroll over option to allow text to speech functionality. • Maps created in Adobe Acrobat 6.0 can be downloaded with features such as intelligent navigation, text to speech and improved keyboard navigation without the need of a mouse.
Regional Official Plan policies related to accessible urban design.	Policy/Practice	Other	• Commenced review and revision of Regional Official Plan policies that guide area municipalities in ensuring accessible urban design, to be continued in 2005.

¹ Gives a description of the barrier and indicates where the barrier was found. For example was the barrier in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice or facility

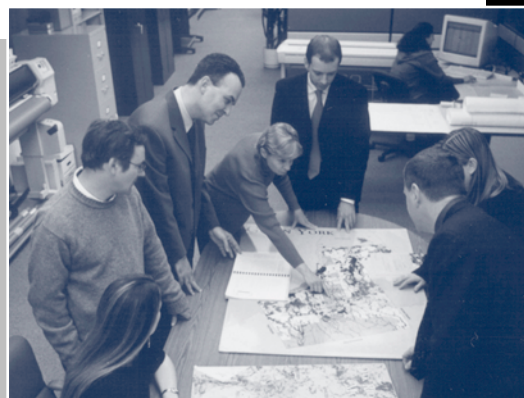
² Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)

³ Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive or other)

⁴ Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier

Barrier Identification for 2005

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing ⁵ (When will this be completed)
Regional Official Plan format and web site.	Review format and method of delivery to ensure compliance.	2005/2006
Public meeting notification practices and location selections.	Continue to review location lists for public meetings and delivery of progress.	2005/2006
Accessibility information to be published in York Region's Visitors Guide.	Premier Ranked Tourism Infrastructure Audit 2005 will gather information on accessibility of tourism attractions.	2005/2006



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Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2005

Barrier Identified ⁶	Barrier Type ⁷	What will be gained by removing or preventing this barrier? ⁸
Regional Official Plan format and web site.	Policy/Practice	To ensure accessible urban design.
Public meeting notification practices and location selections.	Informational Physical	Provide services and facilities that are more accessible.
Premier Ranked Tourism Infrastructure Audit 2005 will gather information on accessibility of tourism attractions.	Physical Informational	Central source of information on accessibility of tourism related businesses.



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⁷ Indicate the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice).

⁸ Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier.



Means to prevent/remove the barrier ⁹	Indicators of success ¹⁰	Timing ¹¹ (When will this be completed)
Review format and method of delivery to ensure compliance.	Accessible urban design.	2005/2006
Continue to review location lists for public meetings and delivery of progress.	Improved customer service.	2005/2006
Publish accessibility information in York Region's Visitors Guide.	Central source of information.	2006

⁹ Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier.

¹⁰ Indicate how customer service will be improved by removing or preventing this barrier. Also indicate any other measure(s) that will be used to determine whether or not the department was successful in removing and/or preventing this barrier.

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Transportation and Works

Environmental Scan

York Region's population is projected to be 1.1 million by 2021 with a corresponding increase in employment to 700,000 jobs. This is causing significant pressure on the transportation system. Currently, 25% of the Region's road network is operating at or near capacity and average congestion levels are projected to increase. This growth requires significant investment in the roads system, water supply and wastewater collection system, solid waste management, and public transit.

The public is demanding higher service standards in road maintenance and transit coverage. At the same time, the cost of delivering these services is increasing. The introduction of Provincial Minimum Maintenance Standards for roads may further increase costs.

Investment in public transit has been strong and has received provincial support. This strong support is demonstrated in the implementation of new bus rapid transit services, beginning in the fall of 2005.

The Region is working to minimize the impact of construction on the environment. Natural environments are returned to near pre-construction conditions where water and sewer facilities are constructed. In the case of road construction, wetlands and wildlife routes are maintained where feasible.

The Department has implemented an International Organization for Standardization (ISO) Program in some areas which emphasizes and improves the management of environmental aspects of its services.

Issues related to the quality of drinking water and disposal of wastewater are receiving greater public attention and concern. Meeting Provincial regulations, which require increased testing, monitoring and reporting, along with capital and operating modifications, will improve the water supply but increase its cost as well.

Major changes to the Occupation Health and Safety Act, such as requiring enhanced vehicle control and protection at work sites, have increased the costs of maintenance and construction.

The economic conditions and growth pressures within York Region are still robust. The Department will continue to experience significant increases in fuel prices, road maintenance and transit operating contracts and the cost of construction. These costs are reflected in an upward pressure on property taxes.

Our Customers

The Department's customers include a broad cross-section of regional residents, businesses, area municipalities and visitors as related to transportation, water and wastewater, solid waste and forestry services.

Accessibility Statement

To plan and provide accessible, safe, cost-effective, quality driven and integrated public transit, roads, water and wastewater, solid waste diversion and disposal, forestry and other related services that support environmental sustainability, public safety and economic vitality, while meeting regional growth and the expectations of regional residents and businesses.

Accessibility Achievements - 2003/2004

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
TRANSIT: Drivers' sensitivity to the needs of customers (Mobility Plus).	Physical Communicational	All	Establishment of program and process for sensitivity training with contractors. Ensure new operating contracts for conventional service include driver training for sensitivity (i.e. monitor effectiveness).
TRANSIT: Maintenance of ramps on buses.	Physical Policy/Practice	Physical	A process was developed for preventative maintenance requirements for transit ramps on all fleet vehicles (i.e. conventional low floor, specialized buses, vans, taxi vans). Maintenance standard as per OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturer) requirements. Ramp maintenance is covered in the performance contract. Requirement is set out in performance contracts and there is a disincentive to the contractor if the ramps are not properly maintained, a cycle counter is used to validate use of ramp. Random audits are conducted by YRT staff.
TRANSIT: Riders with hearing loss unable to use transit call centres.	Physical Communicational	Physical	Teletypewriters (TTY) were installed in both conventional and specialized transit call centres.
TRANSIT: Specialized transit print material difficult to read for riders with low vision.	Physical Communicational	Physical	CNIB standards are used for all Mobility Plus print material.
TRANSIT: Destination signs on conventional buses difficult to read for riders with low vision.	Physical Communicational	Physical	Modified screen display of conventional electronic destination signs for increased contrast and font size, making them more easily read by people with low vision.

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² Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)

³ Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive or other)

⁴ Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier

Accessibility Achievements - 2003/2004

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
TRANSIT: Not all bus stops are accessible.	Physical	Physical	99% of all new conventional bus stops installed in 2004 are accessible. Audit of Mobility Plus bus stops completed in 2004. Fully accessible stops are difficult in industrial areas where no sidewalks or intersections are available.
TRANSIT: Not all buses are accessible.	Physical	Physical	Three new low floor Mobility Plus buses were received in 2004, replacing lift equipped buses. Twelve new low floor accessible conventional buses have been received in 2004; all future bus orders will be low floor accessible.
INFRASTRUCTURE DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION: Lack of access to the Public Education Centre at the new Material Recovery Centre to be located on Bales Drive.	Physical	Physical	Design has been modified to accommodate accessibility.
INFRASTRUCTURE DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION: Inadequate surface for wheelchair or strollers on pedestrian paths in construction site where there is sidewalk replacement.	Physical	Physical	Specified in the road contracts that were tendered in 2004.
INFRASTRUCTURE DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION: Each local municipality in York Region has their own standard for drop curbs on crosswalks at intersections that may not be suitable for persons who use mobility aids or assistive devices.	Physical	Physical	A letter has been sent to local municipalities regarding this.
BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICES: Lack of sensitivity training and coping strategies to deal with customers.	Policy/ Practice	All	Training for Customer Service Representatives in Customer Service - core competency workshop part of corporate Human Resources initiative.

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The nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department.

Barrier Identification for 2005

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing ⁵ (When will this be completed)
TRANSIT: Riders who are blind are not aware that they are at a bus stop.	Investigate options for future consideration.	2005
TRANSIT: Riders who have low vision are not able to read all communication pieces, including the YRT web site.	Investigate options for larger font, etc. for all YRT communication pieces.	2005
TRANSIT: YRT fare media and ticket vending machines may be a barrier to riders with low vision or riders with physical disabilities.	Investigate accessibility of all YRT fare media and ticket vending machines.	2005
TRANSIT: Riders with reduced vision may not know which bus is arriving at stops.	Ensure bus operators receive sensitivity training, and when necessary, announce route and destination.	2005
TRANSIT: Riders with reduced mobility may not be able to reach request stop buttons.	Ensure riders are aware of accessible buttons to request stops while in mobility seating on conventional buses.	2005
TRANSIT: Accessibility within transit terminals.	Overall review of transit terminals.	2005
TRANSIT: Maintenance of securement apparatuses on buses.	Ensure contractors are performing maintenance checks every 5000km.	2005
TRANSIT: Seating for seniors and people with disabilities on conventional buses.	Investigation of signage on buses.	2005
TRANSIT: Designation of accessible transit routes.	Investigate and designate routes as accessible.	2005
TRANSIT: Travel training for registered users of Mobility Plus service.	Following designation of accessible routes, provide training program for select group of Mobility Plus riders.	2005

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The nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department.

Barrier Identification for 2005

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing ⁵ (When will this be completed)
INFRASTRUCTURE DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION: Incorrect height of pedestrian signal push button at intersections/crosswalks.	Field measurement.	To begin in 2005
INFRASTRUCTURE DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION: Lack of hard surface at pedestrian push button poles.	Site investigation.	To begin in 2005



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Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2005

Barrier Identified ⁶	Barrier Type ⁷	What will be gained by removing or preventing this barrier? ⁸
TRANSIT: Quality of contracted Mobility Plus service.	Physical Communicational Attitudinal Policy/Practice	Improved quality of contracted service.
TRANSIT: Improve accessibility to conventional transit (fleet acquisition).	Review inventory of accessible buses.	All off-peak service on core routes will be accessible by spring 2005. Entire fleet is planned to be accessible by 2011.
TRANSIT: Functionality of the technical software used to schedule Mobility Plus trips.	Technological	Expand on the technical functionality of the software, statistical reports, and improved efficiency.
TRANSIT: Access at conventional bus stops and terminals.	Physical Policy/Practice	Access to bus stops for people with disabilities.
TRANSIT: Mobility Plus customer ease of travelling across Regional boundaries.	Physical Policy/Practice	Improved access to travel inter-regionally to Toronto.
TRANSIT: Lack of co-ordinated transportation needs among health, and social service agencies and York Region.	Policy/Practice	Improved co-ordination of transportation to programs.

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⁷ Indicate the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice).

⁸ Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier.



Means to prevent/remove the barrier ⁹	Indicators of success ¹⁰	Timing ¹¹ (When will this be completed)
Review the current service delivery model, review best practices around the province, hire a consultant to undertake study, prepare performance-based contract for contractor. New performance based procurement process and model contract.	On time performance. Customer satisfaction.	Late fall 2004 Implementation spring 2005
Purchase of low floor buses.	Customer satisfaction.	2nd quarter 2005
More staff training on the software. Working with Versyss, the company that developed the software, provide feedback on things that work well and do not work well.	Improved statistical data. Performance measurement.	Spring 2005
Define what an accessible bus stop is. Prepare an inventory of accessible bus stops in York Region. Identify a process for improving on street infrastructure including access to facilities.	Percentage of stops which are fully accessible.	2nd quarter 2005
Service to 3 accessible subway stations (Finch, Downsview, and Don Mills). Implement cross boundary service to specific locations south of Steeles Ave., north of Hwy 401.	Pilot project. Customer satisfaction.	2nd quarter 2005
Establish partnerships with other service providers. Communicate needs and resources.	Customer satisfaction. Improved access to programs.	2nd quarter 2005

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Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2005

Barrier Identified ⁶	Barrier Type ⁷	What will be gained by removing or preventing this barrier? ⁸
TRANSIT: Seating for seniors and people with disabilities on conventional buses.	Physical	Improved accessibility seating.
TRANSIT: Designation of accessible transit routes.	Investigate and designate routes as accessible.	Improved accessibility on conventional routes, possible cost savings for Mobility Plus operations.
TRANSIT: Securement in conventional fleet are not easily managed for riders with upper body mobility problems.	Physical	Improved accessibility on conventional buses.
TRANSIT: Travel training for registered users of Mobility Plus service.	Following designation of accessible routes, provide training program for select group of Mobility Plus riders.	Improved accessibility on conventional routes, possible cost savings for Mobility Plus operations.



⁶ Indicate where the barrier was found. For example: was it in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice, or facility?

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Means to prevent/remove the barrier ⁹	Indicators of success ¹⁰	Timing ¹¹ (When will this be completed)
Place priority seating signage on all conventional buses.	Higher level of customer service.	Throughout 2005
Designation of accessible routes.	Increased customer service, decrease in Mobility Plus operating costs.	2005
Purchase buses with rear facing seats for easier accessibility.	Lower loading time.	Start in 2005
Designation of accessible routes, training program for Mobility Plus riders.	Increased customer service, decrease in Mobility Plus operating costs.	2005

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York Regional Police

Environmental Scan

York Regional Police proudly serves its communities through the efforts of its 1095 officers and 352 civilian members. We maintain headquarters and support facilities in each of our five police districts, delivering community based policing, investigative and specialized services to both urban and rural communities. The organizational structure includes Operational and Administrative Branches which oversee Uniform, Investigative, Support, Information, Financial, Human Resource, Professional Development, and Community Services.

As the region's population continues to grow, there will be pressure on infrastructure and service providers resulting from the expectations of our citizens. As we consider the significant population growth it is important to realize that persons with disabilities represent over 13 percent of our population. They suffer substantial disadvantages and exclusion from the mainstream of society. They face numerous barriers in gaining access to and fully participating in important activities such as jobs, access to information/communication, education at all levels, public transit, and the use of goods, services, and facilities that the public usually enjoys. These unfair barriers can be physical, technological, bureaucratic, legal, or attitudinal.

People with disabilities are a part of the diverse composition of the population we serve. The legitimate needs of all persons drive the need for responsive public services that enhance quality of life. Members of York Regional Police understand the importance of inclusion and will continue to develop strategies and programs that facilitate access to policing services.

Our Customers

The customers of the York Regional Police include all citizens, businesses and visitors to York Region. Providing quality policing services requires a concerted effort to ensure the protection of all citizens, giving specific attention to vulnerable groups and locations in our communities

Accessibility Statement

York Regional Police will evaluate accessibility as it relates to persons with disabilities requiring policing services regardless of the event(s) giving rise to the need for interaction. Education, outreach programs, communication strategies, human resource practices, and criminal investigations will all be reviewed as a precursor to implementing necessary changes that reflect our desire to better serve the public.

Accessibility Achievements - 2003/2004

Barrier Identified ¹	Barrier Type ²	Disability Type ³	How the barrier was addressed ⁴
PRACTICE: 9-1-1 emergency calling capability for deaf, deafened, or hard of hearing.	Policy/Practice	Sensory	Communications staff routinely monitor frequency of TTY calls and converse with associations for deaf, deafened, and hard of hearing.
PRACTICE: 9-1-1 call taker ability to handle TTY calls and successfully move them to downstream agencies.	Policy/Practice	Sensory	Conducted comprehensive review of current training methods to ensure call takers ability to handle TTY calls and successfully move them to downstream agencies.
PRACTICE: Need to deal with members requiring accommodation due to incapacitating experiences.	Policy/Practice	Physical Cognitive	Comprehensive review of Human Resource policies and procedures was carried out to reflect the need to deal with members requiring accommodation due to incapacitating experiences.
PRACTICE: Facility design, build and renovations.	Architectural	Physical	Reviewed all current and future design work on all new construction, existing facilities, and renovation projects to ensure all comply with ODA requirements and best practices.
PRACTICE: Holding Community Forums at various facilities.	Policy/Practice	Physical	Accessibility parameters of facilities are taken into consideration for all Community Forum meetings.
POLICY: First responders dealing with individuals with a disability at an incident.	Policy/Practice	Physical Cognitive	On-going review of first responder training with respect to managing the needs of a person with a disability at the scene of an incident.
POLICY: Dealing with victims of crime who have a disability after an incident.	Policy/Practice	Physical Cognitive	On-going review of current information available to victims of crime to ensure it is available in various formats.
POLICY: Information available in the public domain is accessible for people with disabilities.	Policy/Practice	Sensory Cognitive	On-going review of all pre-printed brochures and York Regional Police (YRP) web site information for content and presentation style.
POLICY: Location of workplace under physical control of YRP.	Policy/Practice	Physical Cognitive	Offered as required on an 'as needed basis' subject to security.
PRACTICE: Testing of candidates being considered for employment.	Policy/Practice	Physical Cognitive	Appropriately designed work space to conduct desktop exercises.

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³ Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive or other)

⁴ Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier

Barrier Identification for 2005

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing ⁵ (When will this be completed)
POLICY: Working with traumatized persons or victims of crime.	Comprehensive review of current policy to ensure it meets all requirements of legislation and medical best practices.	1st quarter 2005 Due to timing of Provincial funding
POLICY: Working with deaf, deafened, or hard of hearing at any incident attended by police.	Review current capabilities with respect to sign language skills.	1st quarter 2005
POLICY: Information collection on pre-printed or electronic forms.	Review forms commonly used by the public to convey information to the police.	1st quarter 2005



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The nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department.

Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2005

Barrier Identified ⁶	Barrier Type ⁷	What will be gained by removing or preventing this barrier? ⁸
PRACTICE: Pre-hire testing and interviewing process.	Informational Attitudinal	Review all testing and interviewing guidelines to ensure there are no inherent obstacles to people with disabilities applying for work.
PRACTICE: Signage at police facilities.	Informational Communicational	Comprehensive review of all signage inside and outside of existing police facilities to ensure appropriate exposure to disabled persons.
SERVICE: Crisis response to incidents involving mental health issues.	Informational Attitudinal	Provide service on a higher level.
SERVICE: 9-1-1 services for deaf, deafened, or hard of hearing.	Communicational	Timely response in an emergency.
SERVICE: TTY services for deaf, deafened, or hard of hearing at the individual District locations.	Communicational	Enhanced access to policing services at the District level for the deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.
SERVICE: Establishment of a Corporate internal Accessibility and Inclusion Committee.	Informational Attitudinal	Enhancement of the abilities of people with disabilities.
SERVICE: Community Alert Notification System ¹ .	Communicational Informational	Police will be able to communicate with large segments of the population simultaneously including the deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.

⁶ Indicate where the barrier was found. For example: was it in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice, or facility?

⁷ Indicate the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice).

⁸ Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier.



Means to prevent/remove the barrier ⁹	Indicators of success ¹⁰	Timing ¹¹ (When will this be completed)
Comprehensive review of all testing and interviewing guidelines to ensure 'best practices' applied to people with disabilities applying for work.	Establishing comprehensive accessibility guidelines.	1st quarter 2005
Appropriate signage.	Enhanced visibility.	2nd quarter 2005
Establish an enhanced Mobile Adult Crisis Team that combines mental health and law enforcement expertise.	Improved incident resolution.	1st quarter 2005
Introduce software to the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system.	Handle TTY calls at every call taker position.	3rd quarter 2005
Introduction of software at individual Districts which allows for direct communication with the deaf, deafened and hard of hearing.	Effective client service for customers with these types of disabilities.	4th quarter 2005
Provision of specific information to enhance the work environment for staff with disabilities.	Increased awareness amongst staff.	1st quarter 2005
Telecommunications system.	Fully operational system.	3rd quarter 2005

⁹ Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier.

¹⁰ Indicate how customer service will be improved by removing or preventing this barrier. Also indicate any other

measure(s) that will be used to determine whether or not the department was successful in removing and/or preventing this barrier.

¹¹ The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2005; the nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department.

